MAY 4, 1987 • $1.95

Big Writers and Little Countries

ARTHUR SCHLESINGER ON SIDNEY HOOK • HOLY COW, IT'S LIBERATION THEOLOGY!

WHAT OSSESSES AL HAIG?

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Morality and Synthetic Sex

Surrogate mothers, test-tube babies, etc.

by Charles Krauthammer

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Display Copy
APR 22 1987

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Voices in the wilderness?

In recent months, three separate and authoritative reports—by the Department of Energy, the National Petroleum Council, and the American Petroleum Institute—all reached similar conclusions. And all three sounded similar warnings—warnings of the sort we have been voicing in this space and elsewhere for the past year. We've argued, as did the reports, that America may have to pay a stiff price tomorrow for the benefits of low-cost oil today. We've argued, as did the reports, that the U.S. should take whatever reasonable steps possible to encourage production of America's domestic energy resources. And we concluded that unless government acted now, the 1990s could bring a replay of the 1970s, with its "oil shocks," "energy crises," and spiraling prices.

DOE, the NPC, and the API all noted that U.S. oil demand has been rising, and production has been falling. During 1986, Americans used about 500,000 barrels of oil more each day than they did the year before. Imports climbed by about a million barrels a day. Last year, Americans imported a net 32 percent of the oil they used. For perspective, at the time of the 1973 crisis, the net import level was 35 percent, and in 1979 it was 43 percent.

The reports mentioned several options for America, without making firm recommendations. We'd like to go further, and reiterate policies we've urged before. And we'd like to reiterate a warning: An oil-import fee is no solution. While such a fee would make it easier for parts of our industry to weather today's economic uncertainty, the price is simply too high. An import fee would saddle American manufacturers and farmers with uncompetitive energy costs, and render them less able to be effective in world markets. This could, in the long run, cost America more jobs than it would save. Trade barriers, particularly for oil, are counterproductive for another reason. The U.S. will always have to import some, and should therefore encourage unrestricted trade in this vital commodity.

Just as we're against an import fee, here's what we're for:

- Decontrol the price of natural gas. While the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission recently approved some higher ceiling prices, about half the natural gas being sold today is still under price controls. Decontrol would give the petroleum industry a lift. The current natural gas surplus will disappear well before the oil glut, but many easy-to-produce gas resources are being neglected. Given the proper incentive, they would be produced—without triggering major price hikes.
- Repeal the "windfall profits" tax. It isn't producing any revenue now anyhow, since oil is selling below its trigger prices. Repeal would signal the domestic industry that if it invests in exploration and production, it will get to keep a fairer share of any future rewards. Similarly, Congress should realize that the oil industry simply can't afford to be singled out for any more special taxes like the Superfund levy, which calls for a handful of industries to shoulder a society-wide problem.
- Continue filling the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. It's an excellent insurance policy—and like most insurance, we hope we'll never need it, but it's nice to know it's there. Besides, America bought a lot of oil for the SPR at $30 a barrel, and at today's prices the government can take advantage of a relative bargain.
- Open up federal lands for petroleum exploration. We've been saying for well over 10 years now that oil and gas production and a clean environment are not mutually exclusive. The waters off the California coast and portions of Alaska, for example, should be explored in a responsible way, primarily because drilling is the only way to learn if the sizable petroleum deposits believed to be there really exist. And the industry's excellent environmental track record justifies the risk.
- The conservation ethic should remain part of America's consciousness. Oil remains a finite resource, too precious to waste, and we shouldn't throw away the gains we've already made through measures like insulation and fuel-efficiency.

As we said, we've been making these arguments for some time now, and they've been bolstered by the three recent reports. We fervently wish that we don't have to repeat them in 1992. We hope, in short, that all the voices sounding alarms today aren't merely voices crying in the wilderness.

Mobil®

©1987 Mobil Corporation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

FOUNDED 1914 — *A Weekly Journal of Opinion* — ISSUE 3,772

WASHINGTON, D.C. — MAY 4, 1987

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Editor
MICHAEL KINSLEY
Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER
Senior Editors
FRED BARNES, ANN HULBERT,
MORTON KONDRACKE, CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER
Managing Editor
DOROTHY WICKENDEN
Associate Editors
JEFFERSON MORLEY, CHARLES LANE,
LOUIS MENAND
New Republic Books Editor
(Basic Books)
STEVE WASSERMAN
Films — *Theater*
STANLEY KAUFFMANN — ROBERT BRUSTEIN
Music — *Poetry*
EDWARD ROTHSTEIN — RICHARD HOWARD
Art
MARK STEVENS
Economics Correspondent
ROBERT KUTTNER
Contributing Editors
ROBERT COLES, HENRY FAIRLIE,
JAMES K. GLASSMAN, HENDRIK HERTZBERG,
JOHN KEEGAN, VINT LAWRENCE,
R.W.B. LEWIS, MARK CRISPIN MILLER,
ROBERT B. REICH, MAGGIE SCARF,
RONALD STEEL, RICHARD L. STROUT,
E. V. THAW, ANNE TYLER,
NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN, MICHAEL WALZER,
C. VANN WOODWARD
West Coast Correspondent
MICKEY KAUS
Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY
Assistant to the Editors
ELISABETH BRANDNER
Production Manager
BRUCE STEINKE
Copy Editor
LEONA HIRAOKA ROTH
Assistant Literary Editor
JENNIFER KRAUSS
Production Associate
KAREN A. WATKINS
Reporter-Researchers
CROCKER COULSON, ANNE GOODWIN,
SARAH HELMSTADTER, JEFFREY L. PASLEY

President and Publisher
JEFFREY L. DEARTH
Associate Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON
Circulation Director
TOM HICKS
Controller
JEAN GANDY
Advertising Manager
JENNIFER BARRETT
Circulation Manager
PATTY JONES
Accounting Manager
MARIA F. SALATTI
Circulation Assistant
KRISTIN CONRADI
Advertising Assistant
DARLENE BUSCAGLIO
Accounting Assistant
CHRISTINA R. OVERHOLSER
Back Issues and Reception
JENNIFER WILLIAMS
Corporate Marketing
GUY STODDARD
Leadership Network Advertising
ROBERT F. SENNOTT JR.

4 **TRB FROM WASHINGTON** ..... ET TU, PENNZOIL?
Lessons of the corporate litigation follies.

6 **CORRESPONDENCE** ..... Immigration reform, tax reform, senility, &c.

7 **THE EDITORS** ..... SEE HOW THEY RUN
What's gotten into the Democratic candidates.
ARAFAT'S ANSWER
Another reality lesson from the PLO.
NOTEBOOK
Hammer and sycophants, doctors and lawyers, &c.

8 **CHARLES PAUL FREUND** ..... THE ZEITGEIST CHECKLIST

10 **MORTON KONDRACKE** ..... STEALING A MARCH
Controversy over the great Central America peace demo.

13 **FRED BARNES** ..... OUT OF CONTROL
Alexander Haig's farfetched candidacy.

15 **JANUSZ BUGAJSKI** ..... SKEPTICAL SATELLITES
Gorbachev's reform act is playing to mixed reviews in Eastern Europe.

17 **CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER** ..... THE ETHICS OF HUMAN MANUFACTURE
Technology is opening up a brave new world of troubling moral issues involving sex, reproduction, and family life.

21 **MICHAEL MASSING** ..... SNAP BOOKS
When big-shot writers drop in on little countries, the result isn't journalism, and it isn't literature, either.

26 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ..... ON FILMS: COMEDY, SHARP AND OTHERWISE
Hollywood Shuffle bites; Susan Seidelman and Terry Jones just jaw.

27 **ROBERT BRUSTEIN** ..... ON THEATER: SNARLS, CONTINUED
British theater sells out.

30 **ARTHUR SCHLESINGER JR.** ..... A LIFE AT THE BARRICADES
Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the 20th Century by Sidney Hook

31 **CROCKER COULSON** ..... HEAVEN CAN WAIT
Liberation Theology by Phillip Berryman
Fidel and Religion by Fidel Castro and Frei Betto
Will It Liberate? by Michael Novak

32 **HOWARD MOSS** ..... POEM *Naming A Painting*

36 **BERNARD KNOX** ..... DESPERATELY SEEKING SOPHOCLES
Oedipus Trilogy, a version by Stephen Spender

38 **DAVID VAN LEER** ..... PUNKO PANZA
Don Quixote by Kathy Acker

42 **WASHINGTON DIARIST** ..... RELAX

COVER by Vint Lawrence for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 17.

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 196, Number 18, Issue 3,772, May 4, 1987. (Printed on April 15, 1987.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 5 & 12, July 13 & 20, Aug. 10 & 17, and Sept. 14 & 21, 1987) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $56; foreign, $81; Canada, $70. Back issues, $2.50 (includes postage & handling).

©1987 by The New Republic, Inc.

(ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. **Subscribers:** Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to **Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322.** For subscription problems call **800-525-0643.**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®

FROM WASHINGTON

ET TU, PENNZOIL?

The *Wall Street Journal* editorial page is red-in-the-face livid that some pissant Texas court wants to make Texaco pay Pennzoil more than $10 billion in reparations for thwarting a merger with Getty Oil Company three years ago. "Texas Common Law Massacre," the *Journal* has been calling it. "Ten-Gallon Outrage," the paper headlined April 14 after Texaco declared bankruptcy to avoid ponying up $12 billion to preserve its right to appeal.

The American business establishment is in general agreement (except for Pennzoil, of course) that this is a helluva way to run an economy. It's a "national embarrassment," says the *Journal*, that "local but utterly destructive legal pitfalls" can bring to ruin a multinational corporation. Will no "serious court" rid us of this turbulent judgment?

On the merits of this case, the business establishment is right to be angry. Pennzoil thought it had a deal to buy 43 percent of Getty for something between $3.5 billion and $5 billion, depending on how you figure. Texaco swooped in and bought the whole company for $10.1 billion. That's about $4.3 billion for the share Pennzoil wanted. It's not at all clear whether Pennzoil and Getty had a done deal that Getty ratted on, or a mere non-binding agreement to agree. But that's arguable. (And, believe me, they're arguing about it.) What's beyond reasonable argument is that Pennzoil didn't lose anything like $10 billion when the deal fell through.

Pennzoil's loss is the difference between what it was about to pay for a chunk of Getty and what that chunk was really worth. Judging from what Texaco paid two days later, that difference is a few hundred million at most—an amount undoubtedly surpassed by the legal bills. Snookered by a lot of malarkey about drilling costs, a Texas jury decided that Pennzoil's loss was actually $7.5 billion, and added $3 billion of punitive damages for good measure. An appeals court reduced the punitive damages to a neat billion, but meanwhile interest charges are swelling the whole pile.

The idea that 43 percent of Getty Oil was worth $7.5 billion more than Pennzoil had agreed to pay is self-evidently absurd. If the figure is correct, it means that the owners of Getty, with lots of expensive expert advice, sold their company—not once, but twice in three days—for about a third of its true value as determined by 12 lay people. If it's correct, then Texaco made a profit of $16 billion on its purchase of the whole company and should be able to pay off the judgment with billions to spare—in which case the stock market has lost its mind and Texaco's depressed shares are now the greatest bargain in Wall Street history. If the judgment is correct, why has Pennzoil rejected Texaco's offer to hand back that 43 percent chunk of Getty for less than Pennzoil's original price? Answer: The judgment is not correct. It's insane.

The business establishment is right to resent the ability of local lawyers to manipulate a local court system and local public sentiment against national corporations. It is also right to despair at the thought of an elderly Texas judge, who usually specialized in divorces, attempting to lead a jury through complex financial matters involving billions of dollars.

Do you smell a "however" coming? Here it is. However, it is amusing to see the corporate establishment fuming about what are, after all, the logical consequences of federalism—an arrangement ordinarily dear to its heart. Conservatives believe as a matter of principle that regulation, taxation, and other affairs of governance should be left as much as possible in the hands of the states. (The *Wall Street Journal*, for example, often cites this principle.) Corporations have fewer high-minded reasons for preferring the social constraints on their behavior to be administered at the state level.

Texaco, like many corporations big and small (including The New Republic, Inc.), is incorporated in Delaware. Despite the derivation of its name, the former Texas Oil Company is headquartered in White Plains, New York—one of those surrealistic exurbs where corporations now cluster in splendid isolation from the woes and demands of human society.

continued on page 41

"Bold and courageous....

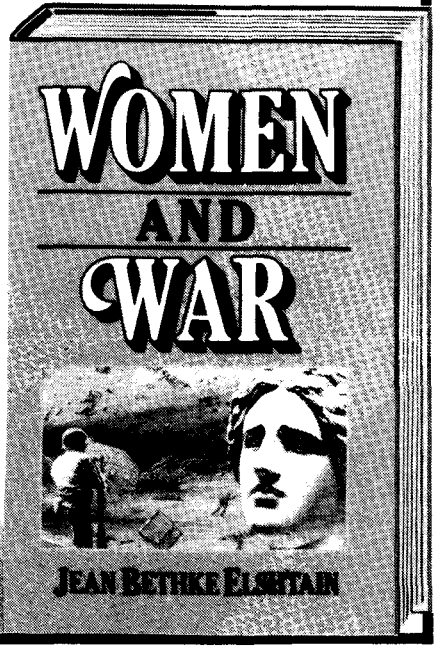
The voice of Jean Elshtain is very special."

—*CATHARINE R. STIMPSON, Founding Editor of Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*

"Elshtain undermines our preconceptions and makes us think in new ways about gender and aggression."—*ROBERT BELLAH, University of California, Berkeley*

"A fine piece of work...

Elshtain rejects the idea of war as simply an expression of masculine bellicosity or of peace as the universal recognition of 'human rights'...These are arguments, I believe, that nobody can afford to ignore." —*CHRISTOPHER LASCH, Author of The Culture of Narcissism*



$19.95 at bookstores,
or direct from the publisher.
Toll-free (800) 638-3030.
Major credit cards accepted.

BASIC BOOKS, INC.

10 East 53rd Street, New York 10022

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Making Waves

Real Rape

Susan Estrich

Susan Estrich calls for the reform of rape law and a new understanding that, even in the absence of weapons or beatings, a woman's "no" should be sufficient to define the crime.
"No one will ever again be able to address the legal problems of rape without taking Susan Estrich's landmark work into account."

– Laurence Tribe

$15.95

Feminism Unmodified

Discourses on Life and Law

Catharine A. MacKinnon

Ranging widely over such issues as sexual harassment, pornography, rape, abortion, and athletics, Catharine MacKinnon reveals a political and legal system that sexualizes power for men and powerlessness for women. And she is determined to change it.
"In this book, MacKinnon enlarges our understanding of the nature of civil rights as applied to women. MacKinnon's radicalism is thrilling, her determination brilliant, her passion literal."

– Phyllis Chesler, Ph.D.
author of *Women and Madness*

$25.00

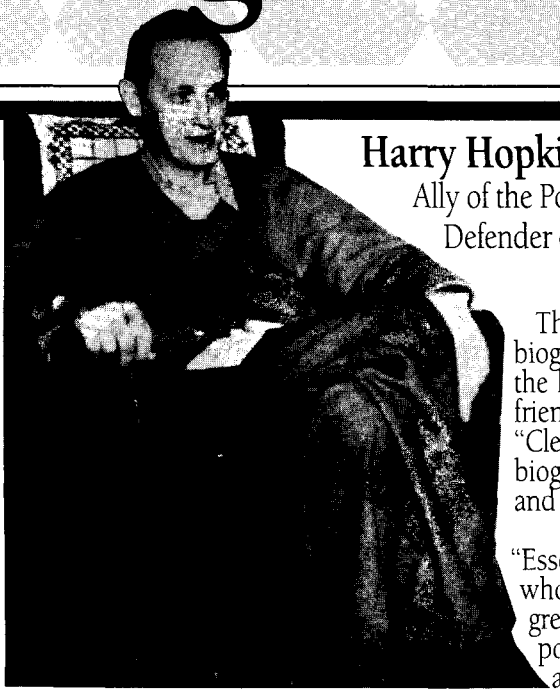
Interpretation and Social Criticism

Michael Walzer

"A rich and lyrical reflection on the practice of social criticism and interpretation, and on the formation of moral standards, by one of our finest social thinkers. It is a little book, divided into three elegant chapters, but it packs a big wallop."

– *Kirkus Reviews*

Tanner Lectures on Human Values
$12.50



Courtesy, Grinnell College

Harry Hopkins

Ally of the Poor and Defender of Democracy

George McJimsey

The first complete modern biography of this remarkable man, the loyal lieutenant and best friend of Franklin D. Roosevelt.
"Clearly the definitive scholarly biography of Hopkins. A splendid and important book."

– Frank Freidel

"Essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the great domestic and foreign policy issues of the New Deal and World War II."

– Robert Dallek, University of California, Los Angeles

$25.00

A Phylogenetic Fantasy

Overview of the Transference Neuroses

Sigmund Freud

Edited and with an essay by
Ilse Grubrich-Simitis
Translation and Foreword by
Axel Hoffer and PeterT. Hoffer

One of the lost manuscripts which Freud intended to publish as *Preliminaries to a Metapsychology*, this handwritten text was found by the editor in an old trunk containing papers of Freud's Hungarian collaborator, Sándor Ferenczi.
"Promises to touch off a new round of debate about the influences that spawned psychoanalytic thought."
– Daniel Goleman, *New York Times*

Belknap
$17.50

Freda Kirchwey

A Woman of *The Nation*

Sara Alpern

Freda Kirchwey was the quintessential new woman – writer, editor, publisher, opinionmaker, feminist, wife, and mother. She was a journalist with *The Nation* from 1918 to 1955, owner and publisher from 1937.
"This book is thoroughly researched, imaginatively conceived, and well-written."

– Kathryn Kish Sklar, University of California, Los Angeles

$27.50

Harvard University Press
Cambridge, MA 02138

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

INS AND OUTSIDERS

To the editors:
In "Immigration Reform II" (March 30) TNR says that because the demand to immigrate to the United States far exceeds the number of visas available, we should increase the number of visas, to one million a year. But that would not begin to satisfy the demand. For the 10,000 "sweepstakes" visas recently made available to people in 36 nations, the INS received 1.3 million applications in just a few weeks. And three-quarters of the people in the world would not have qualified for the sweepstakes. So much for the ceiling of one million, and for fairness.

In the United States well-paying jobs are rapidly declining in number. Things are tough enough for America's own unskilled and low-skilled labor force without importing the Third World's unskilled workers to compete with them. America must answer two basic questions: How many people can we allow in without harming the interests of Americans, and who should those immigrants be? In calling for opening the floodgates, TNR has chosen to duck both questions.

ROGER CONNER
Federation for American Immigration Reform
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:
No one has asked why the 10,000 lottery visas were not granted to those who have been waiting for years. While Congress was feeling generous, it should have cleared the waiting list for preference and non-preference immigrant visas. Millions of aliens who came to this country illegally will receive amnesty while millions more who have applied for legal visas will continue to wait. This hypocrisy could easily be corrected by the issuance of immigrant visas to all those on the waiting list. Then Congress can begin to formulate new, fairer immigration policies.

JANET BYRON
Port Washington, New York

AGE OLD PROBLEM

To the editors:
I was appalled by a cover headline on your March 30 issue, "Is Reagan Senile?," and by the inaccurate and unsubstantiated quote in the article itself: "It is true that aging exaggerates any distortion in a person's problem-solving abilities" ("Reality? Just Say No" by Gail Sheehy). I happen to be opposed to the vast majority of Reagan administration policies, but I do not subscribe to the kind of prejudicial distortion that would blame on age the attitudes, behavior, and personality of President Reagan that would seem to have been lifelong traits. We don't need to use "age" as another basis for the Teflon effect.

ROBERT N. BUTLER
Mount Sinai School of Medicine
New York, New York

TAXING PLAN

To the editors:
Robert S. McIntyre charges ("Rich Man's Populist," March 23) that the tax plan drafted by Jack Kemp and myself "attacked not a single tax shelter." But Kemp-Kasten proposed to broaden the tax base by eliminating or reducing most loopholes in exchange for lower marginal tax rates on individual effort and enterprise. It proposed to repeal 14 income tax credits, among them the investment tax credit and the deduction for state and local income taxes. Our plan increased the personal exemption and the standard deduction. We also included a new wage exclusion for employment income to protect the working poor that would have excluded 20 percent of employment income up to about $40,000. Americans near or below the poverty level would no longer have paid income tax.

Mr. McIntyre argues that the 1981 Kemp-Roth tax rate cut "was designed to shift the tax burden from the rich while raising taxes on middle- and low-income families." According to the IRS analysis of tax returns since 1981, taxes paid by the rich have risen while taxes paid by the middle class and poor have fallen. Although the top tax rate was slashed from 70 percent to 50 percent, the super-rich paid 189 percent more taxes in 1984 than they did in 1981. Americans earning under $50,000 paid an average of 12 percent less.

ROBERT W. KASTEN JR.
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

Robert S. McIntyre replies:
The Kemp-Kasten bill did not call for ending the investment tax credit loophole; it proposed replacing the credit with added depreciation write-offs of equivalent value. Nor did the bill include any other significant tax shelter reform measure. Its shift in the tax burden from the rich onto poor and middle-income families has been documented by the congressional Joint Committee on Taxation (cited in my article). And in a spring 1982 report, the Treasury Department showed that, taking account of inflation's effects on tax brackets, the personal exemption, and the standard deduction, middle-income families either gained nothing or lost ground after enactment of the 1981 tax act.

VIETNAM FILE

To the editors:
Richard Holbrooke's thoughtful review of our book *The Palace File* ("Promises, Promises," March 9) deals incisively with most of the points raised in the book. However, when he questions whether, given continued American aid, South Vietnam could have achieved military victory, he does not make a distinction between survival and victory, as we do. We concluded that with promised American aid the Republic of Vietnam might have survived in a truncated form that included Saigon and the rich Mekong Delta. We did not say that if the United States had kept its promise of maintaining aid it would have meant a South Vietnamese victory over Hanoi.

Mr. Holbrooke says we failed to mention President Nixon's secret letter offering economic aid to Hanoi. We discuss the offer on page 187 and quote extensively from the letter and proposed agreement in an endnote on page 507.

NGUYEN TIEN HUNG
JERROLD L. SCHECTER
Washington, D.C.

RIGHTING THE LYRICS

To the editors:
In Jeffrey Pasley's polemic on "Right Rock" (March 23) he states that The Rainmakers are the "most authentic conservative" band, and selectively quotes from their controversial tune, "Government Cheese." Pasley conveniently de-

continued on page 41

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC
MAY 4, 1987

SEE HOW THEY RUN

At least eight Democrats (Bruce Babbitt, Joe Biden, Michael Dukakis, Richard Gephardt, Albert Gore, Jesse Jackson, Gary Hart, and Paul Simon) are going to run for their party's presidential nomination in 1988, and a ninth (Bill Clinton) may soon join them. What is making these people run?

In modern electoral politics, parties are weak. Traditional vote-churning organizations such as the labor union and the urban machine no longer function as they once did, largely because the electorate itself has changed. The American public increasingly seems to be made up of individuals with few deep political or organizational commitments, who form what ties they do have on the basis of information from the media, and who don't like to vote for a candidate just on some big shot's say-so. Within parties, meanwhile, primaries and caucuses serve as forums for the most ideologically motivated segments of an otherwise politically turned-off public to register their latest preferences. Given the candidates' need to appeal to such people in order to get nominated, and absent strong institutional machinery to help them do so, our system of national politics has become candidate-, rather than party-, centered. It is a competition among individuals, and organizations that represent nothing but those individuals.

This helps explain why the field of Democratic candidates for 1988 has shaped up the way it has. These Democrats are taking their cues from the experiences of four previous Media Age contenders for the White House—Walter Mondale, Ronald Reagan, Gary Hart, and Jimmy Carter. To the current generation, those candidates' experiences seem to show the full range of opportunities and the pitfalls of the highly fluid candidate-centered system. Now everyone wants to imitate what was most effective about those four essential case studies, and to avoid what failed.

The lesson of Carter's maverick victory, for example, was that even utter obscurity need not be an obstacle to success. In fact, a properly stage-managed obscurity can be a electoral plus. Lightning can strike. You can win the nomination, as long as you get out there early—very early—and shake enough of the right hands in Iowa. On the other hand, Mondale's unexpected troubles in nailing down the nomination, followed by his destruction by Reagan, seemed to prove that piling up endorsements from elected officials and building an image of "inevitability" can actually do more harm than good.

Hart's "new ideas" pitch in '84 was basically a variation on the Carter "fresh face" theme, but with an important additional twist. Hart claimed to be attacking the special interests on behalf of a whole new generation of voters at war with the past. Many baby boomers, flattered by Hart's portrait of them, bought it. As for Reagan, who, for all his current problems, is still the undisputed champ of the hustings, his enormous electoral success has demonstrated not only the importance of stating and repeating broad, simple values and themes (less government, strong defense, traditional morality). It has also shown the benefits that go along with true mastery of the media. That means not only the TV time you pay for yourself, but "free" media as well: the Reagan campaigns perfected the art of engineering news coverage for maximum image-enhancement.

Among the current crop of Democrats, hardly anyone wants to be another Mondale. Only Paul Simon (and, in a somewhat different way, Jesse Jackson too) seems comfortable with old-fashioned liberal ideology. With the exception of Richard Gephardt (who has embraced a hard-line pro-protectionism position), none of the candidates is really knocking himself out to appeal to the unions.

A few are trying to update Carter's formula. The lightning-may-strike theory, especially attractive to someone with a Sunbelt accent in a year when 14 Southern primaries will be held on a single day, seems to explain the entry of Gore, Babbitt, and, possibly, Clinton as well. (Babbitt and Clinton are otherwise little known. Gore, who has served ten years in the House and Senate, has staked out a bold and coherent position on national defense and arms control.) And just about everyone except Jackson and Simon is peddling one version or another of Hart's pragmatic "new ideas" formula—especially Joe Biden, who claims that he, not Hart, is the rightful tribune of the new generation.

But is this any way to pick a president? Take Hart. He

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

may not necessarily be any more of a media hound than anyone else, but he is a good example of the tendencies the system promotes. Indeed, Hart shows signs of maturing into the postmodern candidate par excellence.

All the candidates feel a need to manufacture an image, but only Hart seems to repeat this process over and over again. This time around, that is largely a result of a dilemma only he faces. You can only be "new" once. But, he is the front-runner for 1988, thanks to name recognition left over from 1984. The familiarity that makes him the front-runner also makes him everyone's target. In fact, it puts him in danger of being next year's Mondale.

Thus, since "new ideas" isn't new anymore, Hart has to reinvent himself by pushing the "ideas" half. Personally inscrutable and lacking major legislative accomplishments to call his own, he is trying to manufacture both a policy vision and a personality through the sheer detail of his position papers and loftiness of his rhetoric. As one of his aides told the *National Journal*: "Do you define character as having changed your name 20 years ago, or do you define character as a person who, with some courage and conviction, has put forth ideas that may be politically unpopular in some parts of the country?" It's a bit disconcerting to see how eagerly Hart wants to be judged only by the latter criterion. Some of his ideas are, in fact, gutsy: his opposition to protectionism, for example. But what about his latest high concept, "economic empowerment"—defined by an aide as "a way of helping people maintain control of their existence"?

Whether he's conscious of it or not, Hart's new approach also owes a lot to the Reagan formula for campaign success. His announcement speech last week was a tour de force of "free media." Hart bused reporters up to see (and film) him speaking against a gorgeous Rocky Mountain backdrop—and then declined to answer any questions. It was a photo opportunity, just like the ones Reagan stages in the White House. All of Hart's recent policy utterances and lifestyle moves (his retreat to a log cabin in the Colorado mountains, for example) have been diligently served up to the media in a similar fashion. He seems to be designing not only his beliefs, but even certain aspects of his personal life, to be broadcast on television.

This is the wave of the political future. Sooner or later, in

THE ZEITGEIST CHECKLIST

BY CHARLES PAUL FREUND

This Week		Last Week	Weeks on Chart
1.	THE SPIES WHO LOVED ME	1	3
2.	BLACKBALLED	—	1
3.	TEXACO STAR THEATER	—	1
4.	THE PLAY'S THE THING?	6	14
5.	TWELVE O'CLOCK LIE	—	1
6.	HART OF THE MATTER	5	8
7.	TANKS ANYWAY	*	7
8.	OMAHA BEACH	—	1
9.	LET'S GO TO THE TAPE	—	1
10.	GIMME SOME SKIN	—	1

1. THE SPIES WHO LOVED ME

Security fiascos. The humiliating Moscow embassy failure has badly shaken national self-esteem, brittle at the best of times. Reagan says it's the schools' fault, that they're not teaching values. Profound self-blame, reaching well beyond the immediate problem, is a familiar postwar reaction to a crisis.

2. BLACKBALLED

Baseball racism. What if Al Campanis had told Ted Koppel that the scarcity of black managers was an outrage? Appearances would have been kept up, and the country would have dozed through "Nightline." Baseball's righteous indignation smacks of plugging the appearances gap. The fact is that black players will wreck their careers if they rock the boat, and after they retire no one cares what they have to say. So who's pushing for change?

3. TEXACO STAR THEATER

Texaco's bankruptcy. Why is everybody calling Texaco's Chapter 11 move "bizarre"? Bankruptcy as a sharp tactic is established procedure, as Continental showed. In fact, the case is beautiful because you can pick your moral: jury awards are insane; this is where takeover mania was headed; the legal system is out of control, etc.

4. THE PLAY'S THE THING?

AIDS. The entertainment industry only recently started deleting casual sex from its scripts. Now it's organizing to address AIDS specifically in its story lines and songs. The point is to raise AIDS consciousness, which seems pretty high anyway. AIDS is about to become inescapable.

5. TWELVE O'CLOCK LIE

Flight delays. Ah ha! The best-selling fiction at the airports may be the departure schedules. That all those airport delays are allegedly planned fits nicely into many Americans' view of their relationship with large companies: ultimately, it's all a conspiracy to screw us.

6. HART OF THE MATTER

1988. Uh-oh. Did Hart kick off his campaign with "new ideas"? Bad idea. Hart's baggage is that he's last time around's candidate, the "front-runner." If he uses last time around's phrases he's just making his burden heavier.

7. TANKS ANYWAY

Glasnost. Gorbachev's p.r. man must be Gogol. Not only did he delay his Prague trip allegedly because the Czech leadership is too conservative, but when he got there the Czech people greeted him as if he were a rock star. In the international game of political superstardom, it's apparent Gorbachev's got the stage to himself for the time being.

8. OMAHA BEACH

The greenhouse effect. Can you spell chlorofluorocarbons yet? They're the alleged culprits in the ongoing ozone layer mystery, and they're at fault for rising temperatures, too. A new report threatens major climatic change and coastal flooding unless emission controls are enacted soon. Greenhousing is a Third Order catastrophe, if you're keeping score. The story made page 20.

9. LET'S GO TO THE TAPE

High definition tape. Forget colorization; motion picture film may be on the way to obsolescence. High-definition tape gives as sharp an image as film, and is much less expensive. The first feature movie to use HD tape has already been announced. If it's accepted, film goes the way of vinyl records.

10. GIMME SOME SKIN

Fashion. Both the mini and deep décolleté are hot fashion again. But isn't this a period of rising sexual fear? The two aren't necessarily contradictory. Fashion may be used for many things; perhaps sexual sublimation is becoming one of them.

*Item resurfaces in the Zeitgeist after at least one week's absence.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one form or another, this is the game all candidates, even the most thoughtful ones, find themselves obliged to play. Small wonder that three men who had been seen as prototypical representatives of the party's major groupings, Bill Bradley (neoliberal), Mario Cuomo (paleoliberal), and Sam Nunn (Sunbelt moderates), have decided not to run.

ARAFAT'S ANSWER

Just before Passover a firebomb thrown by Palestinian terrorists killed a Jewish woman on the West Bank and critically injured several members of her family. Jewish settlers then rampaged through a neighboring Arab town. Thus continues the violence and vengeance that punctuate the long impasse between Israelis and Arabs over the territories lost by Jordan in the war it started in 1967. There is also an impasse among the Jews, some of whom believe, as Paul Newman told Eva Marie Saint in *Exodus*, that "God gave this land to me." But most Israelis do not believe this. Most are eager for a territorial compromise that would relieve them of the moral (and morale) burdens of being an occupying power over people who hate them and whom many of them have also come to hate. Arab politics generally, and Palestinian politics in particular, do not encourage these stubborn conciliationist tendencies.

Still, Israel's foreign minister, Shimon Peres, has pursued the possibilities of negotiations with the Palestinians and the Jordanians with a fervor that even many Israeli doves think foolhardy. (This is to say nothing of what his right-wing coalition partners think.) Peres has even gotten the Reagan administration to agree that participation by the Soviet Union would be an acceptable price to pay if such an international conference could be followed by direct talks among the affected parties. Peres has also made clear he is willing to involve pro-PLO and PLO Palestinians, provided that they are actually residents of the disputed areas. In fact, he has been meeting with some of them on his own recently.

These are impressive concessions, and they elicited some modest support from President Mubarak of Egypt. King Hussein once again seemed coyly interested. Progress was in the wind. Only the Palestinians had yet to be heard from. Of course, the Palestinians of the territories don't speak for themselves. Most of them say that the PLO speaks for them, and the PLO's response is now in: it is hostile, implacably hostile.

The Palestinian response came over terms for reconstructing Palestinian unity, that perennial chimera for which so many Palestinians have been killed in a fratricide with roots as deep as the enmity they bear toward the Jews. The setting was Algiers, where the warring factions and split-offs of the Palestinian national movement had gathered. Simply to get all the attendees to the same city, Yasir Arafat had to repudiate an agreement he had made in February 1985 with King Hussein to seek a joint Amman-PLO approach to a Middle East settlement.

All the Palestinian militias, the so-called "moderates" and the so-called "extremists," are now exchanging embraces in the one Arab capital where none of them needs to worry excessively about being assassinated by his host. Not just Arafat's Fatah and the factions identified with Habash, Hawatmeh, and Jebril, but also those allegedly renegade operations of Abu Abbas (the mastermind of the *Achille Lauro* hijacking) and Abu Nidal, the indispensable fall guy of Palestinian terrorism. After the reciprocal bloodletting, this macabre assortment is all that the hapless Palestinians have to look to for leadership. And these are the people Arafat still looks to for allies.

All of which augurs more misery for the Palestinians in the territories, caught between an increasingly arbitrary Israeli occupation, which is afraid to restrain Jewish vigilantes, and exile leaders out of touch with everything but the factional imperative and the dream of old maps.

NOTEBOOK

□ LAWYERS, 1; DOCTORS, 0: A federal court has upheld a Massachusetts law requiring doctors who treat Medicare patients to accept Medicare rates as their total fee (of which the government pays 80 percent). Many doctors now charge considerably more, with the patient picking up the excess. The medical establishment complains that the Massachusetts rule is an unjustified government interference in the private relationship between doctor and patient, and the supposedly cost-conscious Reagan administration agrees. In fact, this is the essential Medicare reform, which should be made national. The fact that Medicare is picking up most of the tab clearly enables doctors to charge more than they otherwise would. But Medicare is supposed to benefit patients, not doctors. No doctor is forced to accept Medicare patients, so talk of government "interference" is nonsense. This is the free market in action: here's our price—do you want our business? In this age of doctor glut, few will say no.

□ CAN YOU TOP THIS? The book jacket of *Hammer* (Putnam's, $22.95), a newly published autobiography by the egregious Dr. Armand Hammer, contains solicited words of advance puffery from: Barbara Walters ("a most wondrous journey"), Linus Pauling ("an extraordinary man"), Tip O'Neill ("fascinating, intriguing"), Walter Cronkite ("incredible" [sic]), Arthur Ochs Sulzberger ("a book for all students of history"), Menachem Begin ("exceptional"), George Bush ("insatiable desire to be of help to others"), Dan Rather ("terrific"), Jimmy Carter ("an important perspective on many dramatic events"), Malcolm Forbes ("absolutely absorbing"), Gerald Ford ("fascinating reading"), and Edward Kennedy ("a shining example"). Is this a record? Readers are invited to submit examples of book jackets or advertisements containing more fulsome praise by a greater number and variety of celebrities. First prize is a copy of *Hammer* by Dr. Armand Hammer. A suitable prize will also be awarded to any of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

above-mentioned celebrities who is willing to certify in writing that he or she actually read all of Dr. Hammer's 526-page tome before enthusing over it.

□ SORRY: In an editorial last month ("Beirut Spring," April 6), we expressed dismay over the lack of attention paid to an Amnesty International report on a December massacre of 200 Sunni Muslims by Syrian soldiers in Lebanon. The *Washington Post*, it turns out, carried an extensive story on the massacre in January, before the Amnesty report was published. According to Assistant Managing Editor Michael Getler, the story was not given page-one prominence out of concern for the safety of the *Post*'s correspondent. This, of course, does not excuse our having overlooked it.

□ ALSO SORRY: In our editorial two weeks ago ("Where Did It All Go?" April 20), we repeated a canard that we ourselves have punctured in the past—that the Reagan-era arms buildup is not much bigger than Jimmy Carter's last defense proposal. In fact, that last proposal was issued just a few days before Carter left office—after Reagan had won the election—and was clearly a nose-thumbing exercise, not a serious reflection of Carter defense-spending plans.

Who owns the great peace demo?

STEALING A MARCH

ON APRIL 1 the president of the International Union of Bricklayers, John T. Joyce, sent a letter to his local unions that was remarkable in its vehemence. Joyce, who is generally regarded on domestic policy as a liberal and is close to both Senator Edward M. Kennedy and Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, attacked the planned April 25 Mobilization for Peace and Justice to be held in Washington and San Francisco, saying that "today, as in years gone by, there is a re-emergence of radical left-wing groups dedicated to putting unions, as well as religious organizations, to those groups' purposes. Anyone who knows or remembers the popular fronts put together by the communists in the 1930s will know precisely how the April Mobilization works and what it is all about." Instead of the Communist Party maneuvering well-meaning people around the issues of fascism and racism, Joyce charged, "now . . . the organizers come from the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) and its allies, and the agenda is that of the Sandinistas and of various Central American Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries."

This letter, and an accompanying 16-page analysis of the April 25 Mobilization's background by an aide to Joyce, Joel Freedman, are part of an intense effort by the AFL-CIO hierarchy to discredit the Mobilization and limit labor participation. The American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), the AFL-CIO's organizing arm in Latin America, has produced several sets of documents designed to demonstrate that the Mobe has been deceptive about its organization and purposes.

On March 23 AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland sent a letter to all subordinate state and local federations urging that they withhold support from the Mobilization. He charged that rally organizers were demanding a cutoff of U.S. aid to El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, and said: "It is possible to criticize the Reagan administration's policies toward Nicaragua without embracing the Sandinista regime. It is possible to criticize the administration's policies toward El Salvador without supporting the guerrilla movement. That is the AFL-CIO's position; it is not the position of a number of the organizations that constitute the steering committee for the April 25 rallies, some of which openly support the Marxist-Leninist guerrillas in El Salvador and the Sandinista government of Nicaragua."

The AFL-CIO is exercised because the presidents of 17 AFL-CIO member unions have signed on as public sponsors of the Mobilization and some local bodies are helping to organize and transport the 100,000 people expected in Washington for a march and rally on the Capitol steps and the similar number expected at a demonstration in San Francisco. Included among the sponsors are the presidents of three million-member unions—the United Auto Workers, the American Federation of State and County and Municipal Employees, and the United Food and Commercial Workers—plus heads of the big Communications Workers of America, Service Employees International Union, and International Association of Machinists.

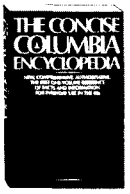
The other and even larger category of public sponsorship for the event is the churches. The presiding officer of practically every major Protestant denomination has signed on, plus the general secretary of the National Council of Churches, 12 Roman Catholic bishops, and the president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the reform branch of American Judaism.

Key speakers at the Washington rally will include the Rev. Jesse Jackson; Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit; the actor Ed Asner; President Kenneth Blaylock of the American Federation of Government Employees; Eleanor Smeal, the president of the National Organization for Women; and spokesmen from Central America. Specific demands listed in the official call for the Mobilization are as general as the public sponsorship is broad: "support peace and freedom in Central America and Southern Africa, stop the U.S. war in Central America, stop U.S. government and corporate support for apartheid, stop U.S. aid to the *contras*, and stop U.S. aid to UNITA." Beneath this idealistic liberal front, is there a "radical, left-wing" reality out to aid "Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries" in Central America?

ACCORDING TO the top organizer of the Mobilization, David Reed, Joyce and the AFL-CIO have it all wrong in charging that Mobilization is controlled by CISPES, favors the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and Communist victories elsewhere in Central America, and is calling for a full cutoff of aid to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. He said that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

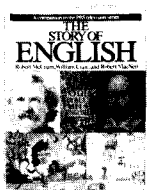
3 BOOKS, 3 BUCKS.



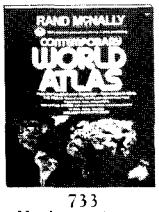
218
Hardcover: $29.95
QPB: $13.50

414
QPB: $8.95

757
Hardcover: $16.95
QPB: $7.95



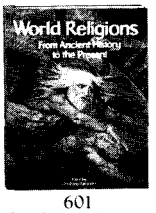
*721
Hardcover: $24.95
QPB: $12.95



733
Hardcover: $14.95
QPB: $8.95

*751
Hardcover: $18.95
QPB: $8.95

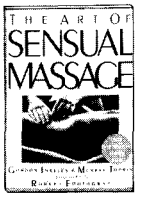
192
QPB: $9.95



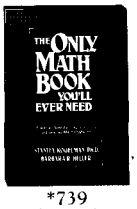
601
Hardcover: $29.95
QPB: $11.95

128
Hardcover: $18.95
QPB: $7.95

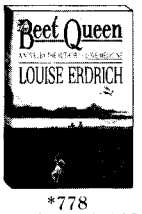
THOMAS JEFFERSON



297
QPB: $9.50

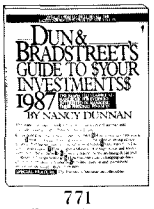


*739
Hardcover: $17.95
QPB: $8.95



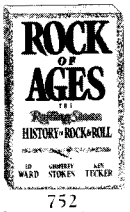
*778
Hardcover: $16.95
QPB: $8.95

306
Hardcover: $11.95
QPB: $6.50



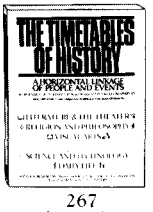
771
QPB: $8.95

775
Hardcover: $29.95
QPB: $11.95



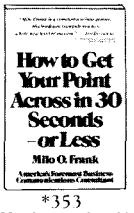
752
Hardcover: $24.95
QPB: $12.50

*108
Hardcover: $21.95
QPB: $11.50

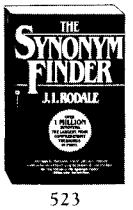


267
Hardcover: $29.95
QPB: $12.95

*227
QPB: $9.95



*353
Hardcover: $14.95
QPB: $7.95



523
QPB: $10.95

NO COMMITMENT. NO KIDDING.

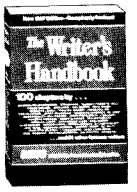
*A QPB Exclusive. The only softcover edition now available.

347
Hardcover: $22.50
QPB: $14.50

*777
Hardcover: $19.95
QPB: $9.95

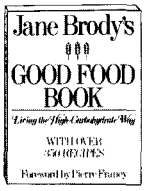
767
QPB: $9.95

PROUST

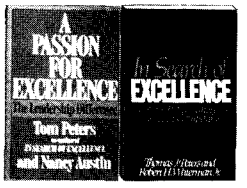


*755
Hardcover: $25.95
QPB: $12.95

672
Hardcover: $16.95
QPB: $8.95



439
Hardcover: $22.95
QPB: $11.50



597
Hardcovers: $39.90
QPB: $16.50

Big Savings: QPB books are softcover books in hardcover sizes, durably bound and printed on fine paper. But they are priced up to 60% less than their hardcover counterparts.

QPB Review: You'll receive the *QPB Review* 15 times a year (about every 3½ weeks). Each issue reviews a new Selection, plus scores of other books. If you want the Selection do nothing, it will be shipped to you automatically. If you want one or more of the other books—or no book at all—indicate your decision on the Reply Form always enclosed and return it by the date specified.

Return privilege: If the *QPB Review* is delayed and you receive the Selection without having had 10 days to notify us, you may return it for credit at our expense.

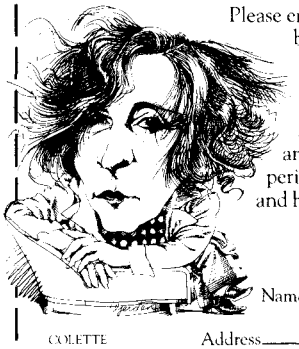
Bonus books for Bonus Points: For each softcover book or set you take (except for the books in this offer), you earn Bonus Points which entitle you to choose any of our softcover books. You pay only shipping and handling charges.

Cancellations: You may cancel membership at any time by notifying QPB. We may cancel your membership if you elect not to buy and pay for at least one book in any six-month period.

QUALITY PAPERBACK BOOK CLUB

Let's Try Each Other For 6 Months.

Quality Paperback Book Club,® P.O. Box 8804 Camp Hill, PA 17011-8804



COLETTE

Please enroll me in QPB and send the 3 choices I've listed below, billing me only $1 each, plus shipping and handling charges. I understand that I am not required to buy another book. You will send me the *QPB Review* (if my account is in good standing) for six months. If I have not bought and paid for at least one book in any six-month period, you may cancel my membership. A shipping and handling charge is added to each shipment.

Indicate by number your 3 choices. ☐ ☐ ☐

7-16

Name _____ (Please print clearly)

QB127-5

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Prices generally higher in Canada. ©1987 Quality Paperback Book Club. All orders subject to approval.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Mobilization is dominated by religious and labor groups, favors reconciliation and negotiations in Central America, has specifically kept Sandinista and Communist speakers off the program, and, except for the *contras*, is not taking a position on aid requests to Central America.

Reed, executive director of the 60-member Coalition for a New Foreign Policy, said that the Mobilization was hatched last September out of a decision by his executive committee—including representatives from the United Methodist Church, SANE, Church Women United, and the United Church of Christ—that Congress's approval of aid to the Nicaraguan *contras* required an escalation of pressure by peace groups, including civil disobedience. Reed said he met with various church representatives first, then contacted David Dyson, a Presbyterian minister who is head of the union label department of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and director of the National Labor Committee for Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador, a coordinating group of international affairs staff members from 25 unions that opposes Reagan administration policy in Central America.

After meetings last October, the Mobilization proceeded on two levels: creating a broad-based church-and-labor public front, and creating a less public organization of peace-and-justice movement activists to manage the Mobilization's programs and themes. On December 12 a mailing went out on National Council of Churches stationery, signed by four church leaders and two union officials, advising potential sponsors that the Mobilization call would be signed "only by national religious and labor leaders."

At the same time, a 32-organization steering committee was put together with five categories of membership. Reed points out that church, labor, and "faith-based" groups make up three-fifths of the steering committee, and "solidarity" and "peace-and-justice" groups make up only two-fifths. "I specifically said that the church and labor groups were willing to take the lead only if the solidarity groups were junior partners."

IT IS ONE solidarity group, CISPES, that has attracted most of the AFL-CIO's fire. CISPES's newspaper states openly that it works "in solidarity with the FMLN-FDR, the legitimate representative of the Salvadoran people." The FMLN is a self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist coalition whose indiscriminate use of land mines is causing more civilian casualties than government bombing raids, according to Salvadoran human rights officials quoted by the *New York Times*. CISPES has created a network of 150 local coalitions designed to raise funds for the FMLN (especially in the form of relief supplies for areas under rebel control), and to put grassroots pressure on members of Congress to oppose military and civilian aid to the government of Salvadoran president José Napoleón Duarte. Also on the Mobilization steering committee are sister organizations to CISPES, the Nicaragua Network and NISGUA, which support the Sandinistas and Marxist rebels in Guatemala.

CISPES may constitute just one of 32 groups on the steering committee, but its director, Angela Sanbrano, is one of five members of the Mobilization program committee, which also contains Leslie Cagan, the principal nuts-and-bolts organizer of the Mobilization and a key organizer of past Mobilizations such as the 1982 event in New York City, which attracted one million people; Jack O'Dell, a close adviser of Jesse Jackson; and David Dyson.

The program committee originally invited a Sandinista government official to speak at the Mobilization—Dr. Myrna Cunningham, governor of Zelaya Norte province—but the invitation was withdrawn, Reed said, when officials of the Communications Workers and the Service Employees threatened to withdraw their support and money. For the same reason Reed says he quashed a proposal to invite a representative from UNTS, a Salvadoran labor group reportedly dominated by the FMLN. Instead, speakers will include a Nicaraguan religious representative and a spokesman from COMADRES, a Salvadoran group of mothers of disappeared persons. Nora Astorga, the Nicaraguan U.N. ambassador, did speak at a Mobilization preliminary event in Los Angeles.

After the AFL-CIO charged that the Mobilization wants to cut off all aid to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, a group of seven top religious leaders wrote to Kirkland in protest: "The appeal we have issued to the American people makes no reference whatsoever to supporting a cutoff of all aid. We appeal to our government to stop U.S. military involvement in Central America and Southern Africa."

SO IN A SENSE the AFL-CIO has overstated the left-wing radical character of the Mobilization. Yet in another sense, the reality is even more ominous than the union perceives. It is not that many well-meaning liberals are being duped by a few leftists, but rather that a vast, committed network of church, labor, peace-and-justice, student, and women's groups has grown up that opposes U.S. policy in Central America—not just aid to the *contras*, but also efforts to aid the elected governments of Presidents Duarte in Salvador and Vinicio Cerezo in Guatemala. The movement ends up rooting for the success of the Sandinistas and other Marxist liberation groups around the world.

Although the Mobilization is formally unspecific about aid cutoffs and support for the Sandinistas, many of its constituent groups are campaigning for those ends. For example, Reed's Coalition for a New Foreign Policy, which includes most church and peace activists, is trying to halt Economic Support Funds for the fledgling Central American democracies. This is straight budget relief that keeps their economies afloat. Reed calls it "dirty economic aid."

Most church and peace groups do not go as far as CISPES and openly identify with the FMLN, but they are actively opposing Duarte. "He represents the landowning class and the export economy," said Reed. "To uphold Duarte as an embodiment of democratic ideals is a distortion of history. He's killed tens of thousands of people to keep himself in power. He's in a direct confrontation with his own people. Without U.S. support, Duarte would collapse." Reed acknowledges that this might lead to a right-wing coup, but

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

says: "The United States can get them to negotiate a settlement" with the FDR, the rebel political front, which he says is not Communist. Why shouldn't there be similar negotiations between the *contras* and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua? "That's not a civil war, friend. The *contras* have no support but us."

The peace-and-justice agenda is that the Sandinistas should stay in power and that Duarte should be forced to negotiate. And there is an army of groups and individuals behind it. An estimated 40,000 Americans have visited Nicaragua alone since 1979 to learn about the "progress" that's been made. Hundreds of thousands of people have been persuaded that what the Reagan administration—and the AFL-CIO—deems to be democracy-building in fact is immoral interventionism, and they are even willing (as Mobilization literature urges) to send food, money, and medicine to the Sandinistas and their allies in the region. Sadly, the administration and the AFL-CIO so far have failed to convince similarly well-meaning people to pray, work, and pay for the advancement of democracy. On April 27 some of the Mobilization people will add civil disobedience to the mix, in a demonstration at CIA headquarters.

Reed says, "Our clear intent is to touch the nerve of Vietnam and say that what happened with Vietnam could occur again—the increased protest and social unrest at home." If the peace movement succeeds again, it's likely that El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, where people have just tasted civilian government and the right to vote, will come to resemble Vietnam and Cambodia.

MORTON KONDRACKE

Al Haig, a man possessed.

OUT OF CONTROL

ALEXANDER M. HAIG JR. has no experience as a national candidate for any office. He doesn't have a regional or national constituency, except perhaps military officers. He lacks even a skeletal political organization. Nor does he have field operatives in Iowa or New Hampshire, the scenes of make-or-break contests in the Republican presidential race next winter. His ability to raise substantial sums of money is very much in doubt. He recently parted company with his chief fund-raiser. Haig has not been endorsed by any leading Republicans. In fact, some of his friends and associates have made it clear they aren't endorsing him for anything, at least now. Haig has no overarching issue with which he is identified, or a smaller issue, for that matter. But he is identified with several of the least popular episodes in recent American history: the Vietnam War, the Cambodian incursion, Watergate, the Nixon pardon. Worse still, another, briefer episode has riveted a single unflattering image of Haig in the American mind, that of a sweaty, overwrought, power-grabbing former general who declared, "I am in control here in the White House" after President Reagan was shot in March 1981.

SO WHY is this man running for president? It's not that Haig is cuckoo. He has his reasons. They are the same ones that have encouraged other marginal candidates to seek the Republican and Democratic presidential nominations in 1988: towering ego, the absence of heavyweight candidates (Reagan, Kennedy, Cuomo, etc.), and the myth that it's easy to win the nomination. Besides, he argues that a Haig campaign followed by a Haig presidency are logical extensions of his career as a military officer (32 years), White House chief of staff, and secretary of state. Campaigning, meeting with people, winning folks over, "That's what military command is all about," he says. "If you don't like people, you don't like politics. I like people."

Haig also likes Haig. Listen to him explain events at the White House after Reagan was shot, and you're left with the impression that he measured up in the crisis and everyone else (James Baker, Caspar Weinberger, Richard Allen, Larry Speakes) buckled. When his resignation as secretary of state was accepted in 1982, he stood tall again. The way he tells it, White House flunkies wanted a pliant secretary. He wasn't about to be pliant. The biography that Haig sends around to the press is no less flattering. "The soft spoken general dresses neatly and conforms more to the stereotype of a diplomat or matinee idol than to that of a rigid military man," it says. "He often surprises audiences with the scope of his humor and his easy manner when talking on the lecture circuit."

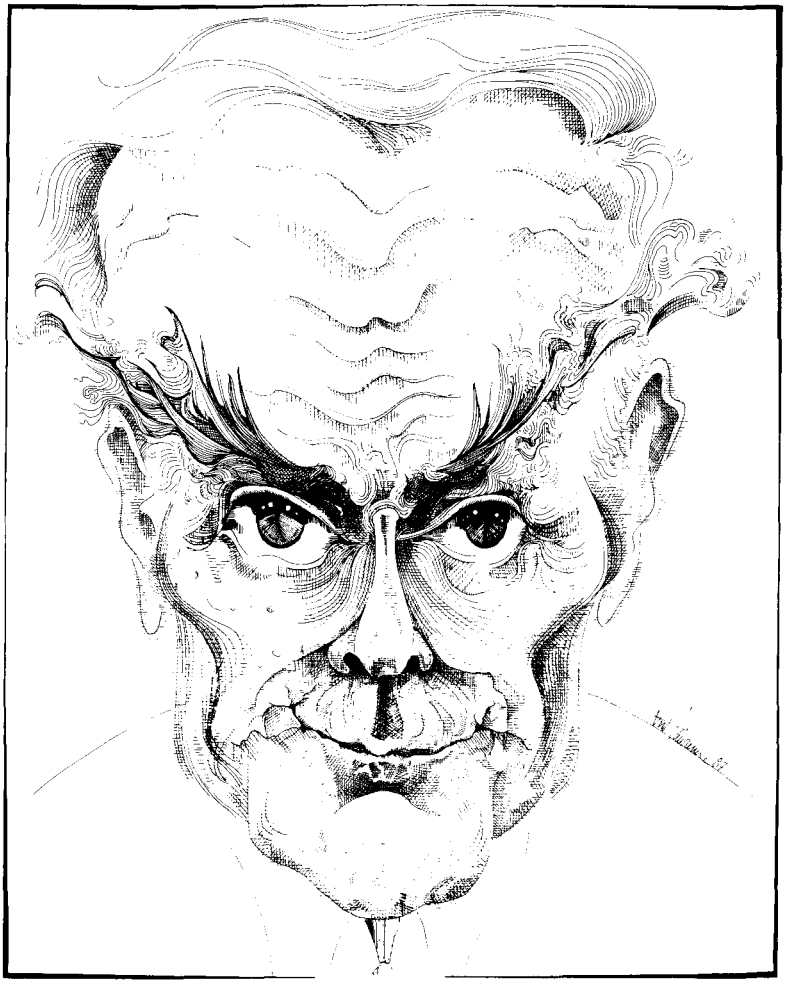
Until the 1970s, ego wasn't usually enough to inspire a presidential campaign. Jimmy Carter changed that. He often told of his experience as governor of Georgia from 1970 to 1974 in meeting the party bigwigs who were gearing up to run for president in 1976. They would come by the governor's mansion in Atlanta in hopes of winning Carter's favor and maybe his endorsement. Instead, Carter concluded that he was superior to the lot of them. Why not the best? Carter asked. He decided to run. Haig has asked himself the same question.

In 1980 Haig looked at running for the GOP nomination and decided against it. But the situation was different then. He had just returned from four years in Europe, where he was NATO commander, and was confronted by a draft-Haig committee. There was hardly a major groundswell, though. "I looked at it for about three months, but I didn't do anything," he says. "It was an impossible task." For one thing, there was a dominant Republican candidate (Reagan) and an incumbent Democratic president seeking re-election (Carter). In 1988 there isn't either a dominant Republican or an incumbent. Nor is there a dominant Democrat, which helps to explain why little-known Democratic senators such as Paul Simon of Illinois and Albert Gore Jr. of Tennessee have jumped into the race. There's no 800-pound gorilla to scare them away. A *New York Times/*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CBS News poll taken in late March shows front-runner Gary Hart as the presidential preference of 38 percent of Democratic voters, but only five percent say they're firmly committed. On the Republican side, Vice President George Bush is the front-runner with 33 percent, but only eight percent of that is firm.

The biggest change since 1980 is the notion that winning the nomination can be a snap, that anybody, even a relatively obscure figure, can capture it. Carter spawned this idea with his success in 1976, and Hart made it the conventional wisdom by catapulting himself into a two-man fight for the nomination solely on the basis of a pale second-place showing in the Iowa caucuses. If lightning struck for Carter and Hart, it can strike for anyone. That's what the myth of a sudden "breakout" by a minor candidate is all about. All that's required is that you have a niche. For Carter it was his moralistic response to Watergate. For Hart it was "new ideas." For Simon it's his proximity to Iowa. His candidacy is based entirely on doing well in Iowa. For Gore, it's the fact that he's the lone Southern candidate. If another Southerner gets in, as Governor Bill Clinton of Arkansas might, Gore will still be the only Southerner with major financial backing by party moneybags.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Haig's niche is name identification. A Gallup Poll in January showed that 80 percent of Republicans and Republican "leaners" have heard of Haig, which puts him behind only Bush (96 percent) and ahead of Senator Robert Dole (76), evangelist Pat Robertson (67), Representative Jack Kemp (52), and former Delaware Governor Pete du Pont (26). The *Times*/CBS survey of presidential preference shows Haig in third place with seven percent, behind Bush (33) and Dole (19) but ahead of Kemp (five). Haig places great stress on polls as evidence that he's not a fringe candidate. "How do you explain that I'm No. 3 in the latest poll among Republican candidates? How do you explain that I'm second, and a strong second, in the state of Tennessee? How do you explain I'm No. 3 in the *Des Moines Register* poll [in Iowa] three or four weeks ago? This from a guy who just announced two weeks ago. I've gotten this in the face of Bush, Dole, and Kemp, who've been running 12 years in the case of Bush and eight years in the case of Dole and Kemp. The American people are looking for qualifications and experience and I think I have that."

Haig acts as if all publicity is good publicity. True, he is extraordinarily well-known. But, depending on which pollster you talk to, one-third to two-thirds of the people who've heard of him don't like him. "John Hinckley has high name ID," says Democratic pollster Harrison Hickman. Robert Squier, a Democratic media consultant, says Haig reminds him of the old story about the eager candidate who went to shake hands with an unfriendly woman. "You are the most despicable politician I've ever heard of, and if you so much as set foot on my property, I'll sic my dog on you," the woman said. The candidate backed off and told his aide, "Put her down as uncommitted." That's Haig, says Squier. Haig would be "a lot better off if he weren't so well-known," says Hickman.

In his speeches, Haig jokes about his high negative rating. Addressing building contractors in Arlington, Virginia, in early April, he said the large crowd was "the kind I so richly deserve and so seldom receive. Of course, if I were being hung tonight, the crowd would be twice as large." Pat Roberts, Haig's campaign manager, concedes that the negative image is a problem. He calculates that, at most, 35 percent of Republicans are turned off by Haig, but that 50 percent are favorable toward him. So all Haig has to do is get half of the favorables to vote for him in Iowa and New Hampshire. That would assure him of second place or a strong third, says Roberts, and will allow him "to move out on Super Tuesday" in the Southern primaries, "which should be a strong base for him." This is idle talk. Getting half the folks favorably disposed toward him is no easy feat.

Anyway, Haig has other ideas. Iranamok has altered his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thinking about the race. Rather than apologizing for his "I am in control" statement, he is trying to exploit it as a campaign asset. "I don't see it as quite the albatross," he says. "Recent events make it even less of an albatross." Haig gladly talks about the statement to journalists and crowds. His thrust is that what is badly needed now is the assertive style and strong leadership he showed back in 1981. Haig explains that James Baker, then the president's chief of staff, urged him to coordinate affairs at the White House after Reagan was shot. Haig first called Bush, who was on a plane to Texas. "George, turn your plane around," he says he told the vice president. Then he warned Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger to take his nuclear forces off alert, so as not to scare the Soviets into a first strike. What prompted him to rush to the press room was spokesman Larry Speakes's lame statement, on national TV, that he didn't know who was in charge at the White House. That statement might have alarmed allies and incited adversaries, says Haig. Before TV cameras, he declared, "Constitutionally, gentlemen, you have the president, the vice president, and the secretary of state, in that order, and should the president decide he wants to transfer the helm, he will do so. As of now, I am in control here in the White House, pending return of the vice president, and in close touch with him. If something came up, I would check with him, of course."

Haig insists he would do the same thing again, only using the word "administratively" in place of "constitutionally." He says it doesn't make sense for anyone to think that a guy always known as "Mr. Cool" would, in his words, "go bonkers." "I was not rattled," he says. "Just the opposite. I was anxious to get the word out. I'll tell you this, too. I haven't spoken to a foreign leader, head of state, head of government, or to many people outside the media belt here on the East Coast or the West Coast who don't say, 'Thank God you did that that day.' "

PLAYING UP the statement is risky. But what has Haig got to lose? The best-case scenario is that he'll play off Iranamok as cleverly as Carter played off Watergate in 1976. The worst case is that he'll fade early in the primaries, his madman image scaring away voters by the droves. In truth, he doesn't have another scenario. His political strength, if he has any, is his personal characteristics, what Roberts refers to as "his leadership and management style." Haig gives issues short shrift. He mentions the deficit in his speeches, but doesn't say exactly how he'd deal with it. He says Reagan should have reached an arms control agreement with the Soviets by now, but he doesn't spell out its terms. Haig concentrates on himself. In 1968 Richard Nixon considered mounting a defense of his famous 1962 tirade against the press, but cooler heads prevailed. Nixon didn't need to do that. He was the front-runner. Haig isn't.

Haig, 62, seems to relish the crisis atmosphere that marked his years in the White House and State Department. When I interviewed him, I noticed that the phone beside him looked like a hotline. It had a large red flasher on it. Throughout the interview, it flashed. Finally, I asked him what it meant. "It means somebody's talking," he said. No, no, I said, thinking he misunderstood. What does all the flashing mean? "It shows your phone lines are working," Haig said.

FRED BARNES

'Glasnost' gets mixed reviews.

SKEPTICAL SATELLITES

TWO YEARS into Mikhail Gorbachev's tenure, Eastern Europe's Communist parties are still trying to sort out what *glasnost* means for them. The Soviets' essential priorities for the Eastern bloc remain the same: stability and tranquillity, the maintenance of overall Soviet control, and smooth leadership transitions in states where aging Party leaders may soon be joining Lenin. Gorbachev has assured wary Party leaders that their political systems will remain intact and that "socialist relations of production" will not be challenged.

Still, Gorbachev clearly also wants the countries to shake up their sluggish economies, which could have unpredictable consequences for those who profit from the existing arrangements. And *glasnost* does not necessarily appeal to leaders (such as those in Czechoslovakia and Poland) who not too long ago had to clamp down on internal ferment at Moscow's behest. As a result, Gorbachev's new act is playing to mixed reviews among the satellites.

One potential source of friction is economic integration. Since the early Brezhnev years (i.e., since the invasion of Czechoslovakia), the Soviets have found political and economic pressures sufficient to keep deviance in the bloc from getting out of hand. (The Polish crackdown on Solidarity was the major exception.) As long as individual leaders guaranteed Communist rule, and paid appropriate homage to "proletarian internationalism," their idiosyncrasies could be tolerated. Now, however, the Soviets want the bloc to act in greater concert. The Kremlin is pushing for tighter integration of Eastern European economies and for the adoption of a "new economic mechanism" that would eliminate the "anomalies" of central planning through scientific management methods. Of course, higher productivity in the East bloc serves Moscow's self-interest. But it may carry costs for the satellites. In the past they have resisted Kremlin-sponsored integration, fearful of too much dependence on Big Brother and of isolation from the West.

Gorbachev wants the bloc to present a united front in foreign policy as well, in order to bolster Soviet positions vis-à-vis the West. For example, Eastern bloc Party secretaries responsible for ideology and foreign affairs recently hammered out a *glasnost* campaign modeled on the three essential ingredients of Gorbachev's own *glasnost* propaganda: "socialist democracy, human rights, and economic

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

restructuring." Eastern Europe is expected to play a major supportive role for Moscow in driving wedges between Western Europe and the United States, and to continue in its usual chore of promoting "the prestige and appeal of socialism" throughout the world. Still, the Gorbachev doctrine doesn't preclude better ties with the West. Indeed, Moscow's self-interest could lead it to grant the bloc continued leeway in this respect. Contacts may in fact be encouraged as a means of capturing Western technology and credits that ultimately redound to Moscow's own benefit.

IF ANYONE SHOULD be happy with Gorbachev, it's the Hungarian Party. The Soviets don't have much of economic substance to offer the relatively prosperous and free-marketing Magyars, but Gorbachev does provide valuable reinforcement for their reforms. Indeed, Moscow's shift to revisionism may embolden Budapest to pursue further changes. And Hungary's Party could use the help. Despite its experimentation, Hungary is beset by foreign debt, falling living standards, and social tensions. Its leaders face a dilemma—whether to trim their reformist sails or introduce a still broader market economy. Some Party elements warn that Budapest has already strayed too far down the capitalist road. Hungary's management of these difficult trade-offs will be watched closely throughout the Soviet bloc, though entrenched Communist elites in Hungary and elsewhere are unlikely to act on the essential lesson: that economic concessions without political guarantees may only provide short-term solutions.

East Germany too would seem to have little to fear from Gorbachevian change, though for quite different reasons. To the German Party, *glasnost* isn't really relevant. The regime isn't about to allow any discussions of Eric Honecker's policies, and that's that. As for economics, Gorbachev seems more interested in importing German-style economic performance than in teaching East Berlin lessons of his own. During his trip to East Berlin last year, for example, Gorbachev spoke enthusiastically about the Germans' work discipline, implicitly comparing it to the disastrous sloth of the Russians. Soviet planners are in raptures about East Berlin's streamlining. Still, there are potential tensions. Gorbachev hopes to get more for the Soviet Union itself out of East Germany's "mini-miracle"—which is aided by its extremely favorable relationship with West Germany. And he intends to keep firm control of any inter-German rapprochement.

Elsewhere, however, Gorbachev's reforms have been met with varying degrees of skepticism and resistance. Old guard figures such as Nicolae Ceauşescu of Romania seem to feel especially threatened. Ceauşescu prides himself on an independent foreign policy. Yet this apparent external autonomy disguises the internal repression that maintains his clan in power. The Romanian leader recently delivered two notable speeches criticizing Gorbachev's reform and praising Bucharest's "correct road to communism." The Party refuses to admit its economic blunders. Meanwhile, the state-controlled media are saturated with praise for Nicolae—"the fountain of Romanian wisdom." Yet it is not in the Soviet Union's interest to lean too heavily on Bucharest. That could provoke dynastic instability. Gorbachev would rather preserve the status quo for now and use economic pressure to nudge Romania in the right direction.

In Czechoslovakia, too, there is a good deal of uneasiness. Too much *glasnost* in Prague would threaten orthodox apparatchiks. Any tampering with Czech "normalization," the leaders argue, could unmuzzle the socialists "with a human face" who have been held at bay since the 1968 Soviet invasion. Prague appears to be paying only lip service to *glasnost*. The local censors have never matched the sophistication of their Polish and Hungarian counterparts. They have been known to alter statements from the Kremlin itself if they contain too much criticism of central planning and bureaucratization. Vasil Bilak, the Central Committee secretary in charge of propaganda, recently warned that any reform of communism would be "a convenient cover for anti-socialist tendencies." A more reformist faction could possibly crystallize around Prime Minister Lubomir Strougal, particularly after Party leader Gustav Husak's demise. But any behind-the-scenes tussle between "ideologues" and "technocrats" that may be under way now is either very low-key or being deliberately hushed up.

POLAND'S REGIME seems more receptive to Gorbachev, but this falls well short of unbridled enthusiasm. The Polish Party has had its own experience at attempting economic reforms that are both productive and politically safe for the Party. Thanks largely to the intransigence of the provincial Party apparatus, that experience has not been very positive. Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, who engineered the 1981 crackdown on Solidarity, cannot afford to allow any leeway to independent political reformers and workers' leaders. He ignores Solidarity's proposals for genuine economic restructuring and will only implement half-hearted measures at the state's own ponderous pace. As for *glasnost*, the Polish government has become expert at novel propaganda techniques that Moscow itself is now emulating. The Kremlin has precious little to teach Warsaw's smooth spokesmen.

The real conflict in Eastern Europe is not between the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites. It is between the Party apparatus and a disenfranchised society. Struggles between reformists and reactionaries mainly involve various interest groups within the ruling elite. The masses are left out, except as pawns. One can only guess whether Soviet and Eastern European "traditionalists" will launch a counteroffensive against Gorbachev's innovations—or whether the empire's suppressed populations will strike back by taking reform more seriously than they are meant to.

JANUSZ BUGAJSKI

Janusz Bugajski is a research associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Artificial babies, artificial families, artificial sex.

THE ETHICS OF HUMAN MANUFACTURE

BY CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

DURING THE WEEK that the Baby M case reached its dismal conclusion came delight at news of a medical breakthrough. Doctors in Mexico had treated with apparent success two patients suffering from Parkinson's disease by transplanting tissue from the patients' adrenal glands into their brains. Two events to symbolize the moral poles of modern medicine: on the one hand, a tinkering with procreation with at best ambiguous, at worst monstrous moral possibilities. On the other hand, scientific skill and cunning unambiguously in the service of hope.

But things are not so easy. As a gateway to moral monstrosities, we have more to fear from the good news out of Mexico. Adrenal transplants are just the imperfect first stage of treatment for Parkinson's. The next step is transplanting the brain tissue of a fetus into the adult patient. Fetal tissue is perfect. It is far more plastic and adaptable than adult tissue. In mice it seems to find its way to the right place and to the appropriate physiological function. The ultimate hope for treating the major brain diseases—Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, congenital anomalies, and perhaps spinal cord injury—lies with transplanting the young and supple tissue of the human fetus into the adult.

Researchers in Rochester, New York, have done it in monkeys. Scientists are itching to do it in humans. The Chinese, who for the past 40 years have been operating generally at the moral frontier, are reported to have done it already. Their results are due in June. In a review of brain transplantation advances in the August 1986 *Scientific American*, Dr. Alan Fine writes of a "widely felt sense among scientists" that "it is urgent to attempt neuronal transplants in human beings." And what is "the likeliest source of embryonic neurons for transplantation"? It "appears to be tissue from aborted fetuses."

The fetus as organ farm is not the worst of it. We are now hearing the first proposals for a more mature source of transplantable organs: anencephalic newborns (babies born with most of their brains missing). In New Jersey, rapidly becoming the brave new world of reproductive technology, Assembly Bill 3367 would permit parents to donate the organs of an anencephalic child. Under current law, parents have to wait for the child to die first. That inconvenience is avoided if the law declares the infant dead before it dies. Alex Capron, professor of law, medicine, and public policy at the University of Southern California, has written a spirited demolition of this idea in the current issue of the *Hastings Center Report*. He points out that once you start redefining living persons as dead, even living persons who will shortly die, you have enacted into law the nightmarish premise of *Coma*, in which vast farms of the living dead were maintained as organ sources. Ten years ago this idea was the basis of a science fiction horror. Today it requires scholarly demolition. Tomorrow the objections may appear quaint.

I bring up this bit of medical ghoulishness, almost randomly chosen from today's news, to give context to the various reports issued in the West on the ethics of the new reproductive technologies. It is important to define the stakes. They are not simply whether to countenance messy custody fights à la Baby M. They are whether—how much, in fact—to countenance the brave new world of human manufacture that is now dawning.

When the stakes are so defined, the document from the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on artificial forms of procreation ceases to be the object of derision. It was the target of every village atheist, including one who recently clucked in these pages that "the document is not, repeat not, entitled 'Sex Tips for Modern Girls from 60-Year-Old Bachelors Who Have Taken Vows of Chastity.' " Context is important because the Vatican document, whatever its other intentions, is a radical act of resistance to the technological hubris of modern reproductive medicine and to the Frankenstein world that it is rapidly making possible.

Moreover, there is a coherence to this document that is lacking in the other major reports on embryological technology. This is not to detract from the intelligence of reports such as those from the Ethics Committee of the American Fertility Society or the Warnock Committee in Britain, or the "Report on the Disposition of Embryos Produced by In Vitro Fertilization" from Victoria, Australia, which are among the three most important documents on the subject issued in the English-speaking world. Their task was impossible. Their reports were drafted by committees made up of people purposely chosen for the diversity of their views and constituencies. It is a wonder that these committees produced any document and any recommendations at all. It is no wonder that the Vatican declaration, issuing from a unified community with a shared body of doctrine, should be intellectually more satisfying.

And yet, in the end, it is far less useful. The Church opposes everything: in vitro fertilization, embryo freezing, embryo transfer, surrogate motherhood, artificial insemination not just by donor but even by husband. The Church

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sees what hell lies at the bottom of the slippery slope, and rather than erect bulwarks, detours, and sand bags, it declares the entire mountain off-limits. Where the report fails is in its refusal to draw lines, or rather in its insistence on drawing lines at such enormous protective distance from the hellish center that the exercise loses its power to persuade. The secular Warnock Commission, on the other hand, was forced by its composition to reach far messier and thus more useful conclusions. It makes an attempt at moral calculus that is wholly absent from the cold logic of Cardinal Ratzinger. And while Warnock draws bright lines at sometimes awkward intermediate points, it produces recommendations more credible, more humane, and more morally reasonable.

IN THE BROADEST terms, science has given us three new inventions: synthetic children (test-tube babies), synthetic families (surrogate parenting), and synthetic sex (artificial insemination). Each poses a different kind of moral problem. Each has a different moral valence. Each should elicit a different response from the state. The first, fetal manipulation and experimentation, is a threat to human dignity. The second, third-party donation of gametes (eggs or sperm), is a threat to the family. The third, artificial insemination or in vitro fertilization that enables marriage partners to have their own children, is a threat to sexuality.

Artificial Babies

AT THE INNERMOST circle of hell is the manipulation of the fetus. This includes not just in vitro fertilization (IVF), but embryo freezing for future use, experimentation on the embryo, and ultimately perhaps the growing of fetuses as organ farms. The Church's position on all this, beginning with in vitro fertilization, derives from an axiom not consensually shared: "The human being must be respected—as a person—from the very first instant of his existence." But in dealing, for example, with embryo freezing, it goes on to invoke other, natural law reasons: freezing embryos means "exposing them to grave risks . . . and depriving them, at least temporarily, of maternal shelter and gestation, thus placing them in a situation in which further offenses and manipulation are possible." And the discarding of spare embryos, which occurs routinely in IVF (since more eggs are fertilized than are implanted in the mother's uterus), "leads, whether one wants it or not, to man's domination over the life and death of his fellow human beings and can lead to a system of radical eugenics."

A fairly impressive bill of impeachment. It flows ultimately from the Catholic position that life begins at conception, but does not depend on it. The secular reports, which do not have that certainty to hang on to, have greater difficulty dealing with the issue of preserving the dignity of the embryo. The Warnock report, for example, accepts the "natural law" reasons forbidding use and abuse of the fetus. It begins with the proposition that an embryo is not fully human, and yet deserves special protection. However, it invokes that protection at an unfamiliar point, 14 days after conception, just before neural development begins. It recommends that before 14 days, the tiny mass of cells be considered tissue that may ethically be disposed of or subjected to research; and that after that time experimenting on a human embryo be made a criminal offense.

Fourteen days is not as crazy or arbitrary a line as it seems. It happens to be the line recommended by almost every secular ethics committee in the English-speaking world: a 1979 HEW ethics board, the 1984 Victoria (Australia) committee, the 1985 Ontario Law Reform Commission, and the 1986 American Fertility Society Report. (France's National Ethics Committee recommended seven days.) Fourteen days marks the development of the "primitive streak" after which twinning is no longer possible and neural development begins. It is also important clinically. The technique of in vitro fertilization involves taking an ovum and sperm and mixing them in a laboratory. Because the "take" upon implantation in the uterus is difficult, more than one ovum is fertilized. The clinician watches in a dish to see which pre-embryos (we might call them) are developing best and implants those. The others are discarded. Without the 14-day bright line, discarding these "spare embryos" would have to be considered murder.

Those not persuaded by faith that life begins at conception will find it hard to credit the idea that a mass of, say, 16 cells is a person and discarding it is murder. How, then, to proceed? You are forced to perform a moral calculus. The 14-day rule balances the social good derived from IVF (a family for childless couples) against the rights of, say, a 16-cell organism. It finds for the former and permits IVF to continue. But it permits no more. It forbids indiscriminately using, discarding, and experimenting on the fetus beyond the point when it begins to take on human characteristics. It stops us at some distance from the *Coma* universe that is now palpably within reach.

THE PRINCIPAL objection to the 14-day rule, or any line erected after conception, is this: The moral calculus may be fine, but what of prudence? Does 14 days not prepare society for 14 weeks, then 40 weeks? Does any such rule not place us on a slippery slope? The answer is that society already lives there. In fact, it has slid far beyond the 14-day period. In most English-speaking jurisdictions, one can do with an aborted fetus that is many weeks old pretty much what one wants: discard, research, implant. The 14-day rule is thus a considerable step back from current practice. It moves us further up the slope from where we are today.

Why not, then, retreat all the way to the top, to the brighter line of the Vatican's 0-day rule? Because most people reject the notion that personhood begins at conception. If drawing lines against fetal abuse is the object, drawing them at a place where they will not be accepted is not prudent. For those, the majority, who do not believe on faith that personhood begins at conception (life obviously does, but then again even a sperm is living),

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

there is no way off the slope. Best to find a reasonable way to live on it.

Artificial Families

THE SECOND CHALLENGE offered by the new technologies is babies born not so much from laboratory technology as from hybrid genealogies. There is a dizzying combination of such possibilities: artificial insemination by donor, where a third-party male impregnates the wife; ovum donation, where a third-party female is fertilized with the husband's sperm and the embryo is implanted in the wife; embryo donation, where third-party sperm and fourth-party ova are fertilized in vitro and implanted in the wife; and, most famously, surrogate motherhood, where the father donates the sperm to a third party who carries the child and agrees to give it up. The Church opposes any role for a third party in donating gametes or in gestating the child.

The reason is to protect the sanctity and the coherence of the family. But again this is an issue that cries out for distinctions. The Vatican's rigid position would ban even as unremarkable a procedure as artificial insemination by a donor. After all, in adoption there is no genetic connection whatsoever between the child and the parents, and that in no way invalidates the notion of family. In addition, when widows (or, where permitted, the divorced) remarry, children live with one or another non-biological parent, and again the arrangements deserve to be called family. It may not be the ideal family, but it is the best that people can do. For infertile couples, the best they can do may involve having a third party participate in the creation of a child.

Are all such forms of participation then morally equal? The Warnock report makes an interesting implicit distinction. It doesn't care very much whose genes are producing the child. If people cannot produce their own, then donation from third parties, if all are agreeable and if anonymity is preserved, is an appropriate means to cure infertility and produce the joy of a family. But Warnock does oppose farming out gestation (surrogate motherhood). Donating gametes might be seen, like donating blood or a kidney, as a mere biological transaction. But renting out one's womb and then giving the child up to an adoptive couple is a social transaction. It is far more troubling. What troubles Warnock is the possibility of exploitation. ("That people should treat others as a means to their own ends, however desirable the consequences, must always be liable to moral objection.") What troubles me is the violation of the maternal bond when, as in the Baby M case, a mother is cut off from the child she bore and now wants.

Warnock recommended that criminal penalties be imposed for operating surrogacy agencies and that all surrogacy contracts be considered illegal and unenforceable in the courts. In 1985 Britain did ban surrogacy. Brokering such a contract is now a criminal offense in Britain, punishable by jail. (Interestingly, it was not the commission that led to the ban, but the ballyhoo surrounding the birth of Britain's first surrogate baby. "Baby Cotton," born in January 1985 to a surrogate mother recruited by an American couple, was shipped to the United States after birth. Nationalism may have played a greater part in the subsequent ban than all of Warnock's fine reasoning.)

In my view Britain has gone further than a liberal society should regarding surrogacy. Surrogacy can be an act of love and generosity: in South Africa, a mother is bearing the triplets of her infertile daughter (daughter's ova implanted in mother's uterus). And the idea of an infertile couple turning to another woman to bear the father's child has biblical precedent. (Two differences: Abraham and Jacob used non-artificial insemination, and the children did not consider the infertile wife to be their mother.) If three people agree among them to this arrangement (in the United States it has proceeded to a satisfactory conclusion in 495 out of 500 cases) and it relieves the suffering of the childless, I do not see why the state should stand in the way.

On the other hand, after the appalling spectacle of the Baby M case in New Jersey, it is clear that the state should not encourage the practice. This form of cure for infertility should be at best tolerated. The New Jersey judge's ringing endorsement of the inviolability of the surrogacy contract is precisely the kind of encouragement that should be avoided. The forced separation of mother from infant for the purposes of enforcing a contract is an outrage. Does conceiving and carrying a child to birth count for nothing? Maternal instinct must have some claim. When the laws of surrogacy are written, as they undoubtedly will be after this case, they should allow a mother to have the choice after birth of keeping the child, as she would in an ordinary adoption case. Such a solution has the virtue not only of making more natural—more like adoption—the thoroughly unnatural surrogacy transaction. It would also discourage the practice (since the father would not be sure of getting the child) without banning it.

Artificial Sex

THE FINAL VALUE that the Vatican document seems concerned to protect is the sanctity of the conjugal act. In the name of a particular apprehension of what proper physical love should be, the Church goes all the way in banning artificial techniques of procreation. It opposes even artificially assisted fertilization of one spouse by another, such as a husband artificially inseminating his wife (AIH). Why? Not because it is artificial but because it breaks the "inseparable connection . . . between the two meanings of the conjugal act: the unitive meaning and the procreative meaning." This is precisely the same grounds on which the Vatican bans birth control. Birth control is sex without the redeeming possibility of procreation. AIH is procreation without any redeeming union of the flesh. Both are morally proscribed.

Here is where the dismay sets in. This is not an issue of protecting the sanctity of fetal life. Nor is there a threat to family life (as when a third party interferes with the genetic or gestational endowment of the child). Neither the fetus nor the family is under threat, only the Church's notion of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the proper union of spirit and flesh. Artificial fertilization "objectively deprives conjugal fruitfulness of its unity and integrity." Yes, yes, but the problem here obviously is lack of fruitfulness, or there wouldn't be a resort to artificial insemination in the first place. Ratzinger speaks of "the child's right to be conceived and brought into the world in marriage and from marriage." Yes again, but in a sterile couple, that right is rather theoretical. There will be no child without artificiality.

No doubt there is a certain perfection of the human spirit when the "unitive and procreative" functions are combined, but we are dealing here with precisely those people who for reasons of biological accident alone are imperfect and unable to achieve the unity that the Church—and they, no doubt—so devoutly desire. Birth control is the willful severing of these functions by people quite capable of uniting them. Artificial insemination is not. And the alternative is the very real suffering of childlessness. Ratzinger's advice to the childless is this: "Spouses who find themselves in this sad situation are called to find in it an opportunity for sharing in a particular way in the Lord's Cross, the source of spiritual fruitfulness."

Cold comfort. It may be good theology; I am in no position to judge. Nor need I. The Vatican document is not intended solely as a guide for the faithful. If it were, the foregoing analysis would be not just irrelevant but disrespectful. It is neither, because the document explicitly intends to influence *civil law*. It thus invites secular critique. It gets it. Warnock gives the Catholic position on intrafamilial AI appropriately short shrift. As Warnock writes, the characteristic objection to AIH (and IVF: but IVF is more problematic because it requires the destruction of "spare embryos," an arguably serious offense against fetal dignity) is that it "represents a deviation from normal intercourse and that the unitive and procreative aspects of sexual intercourse should not be separated." The objection is recognized as sincere, then dismissed. "We would not rely on those arguments for the formulation of a public policy."

THAT IS TRUE for the entire Vatican document. In this sense it fails on its own terms, because it does not pose as a sectarian document. It does ground itself in faith, and its references are practically all to Vatican II or papal pronouncements. But the Church strains here to present itself as "an expert in humanity." Its recommendations are explicitly intended to make not just canon law but civil law. "Civil law cannot legalize the donation of gametes between persons who are not legitimately united in marriage," it declares. "Legislation must also prohibit"—for everyone, Catholic or not—"embryo banks, post mortem insemination, and surrogate motherhood." The Vatican even encourages "conscientious objection" and "passive resistance" to the legitimation of those practices it finds "contrary to human life and dignity."

In another religious tradition, there is the notion of legal and moral fences. "Make thou a fence to the law," says the Talmud. A fence means prohibiting actions that, although not in themselves wrong, are a gateway to actions that are. For example, the prohibition against murder could lead to a prohibition against carrying a weapon of murder (not in itself an inherently evil act), a fence around the first law. That in turn could lead to the prohibition against mere possession of a weapon of murder, a fence around the fence. At some point, however, the fence-building must stop or the whole structure falls from lack of credibility. What point? The point at which one loses sight—too many fences—of one's original core concern.

THE VATICAN does establish a hierarchy of concerns. The gravest offense is that against life. The inner core of the Church's concern about the new reproductive science is—correctly, in my view—the new technologies of fetal manipulation that are drifting into legitimation. But, for those outside the faith, the Vatican attempt to prohibit all artificial means of procreation even within marriage and within the family becomes a fence too far. "The origin of the human person is the result of an act of giving. The one conceived must be the fruit of his parents' love. He cannot be desired or conceived as the product of an intervention of medical or biological techniques; that would be equivalent to reducing him to an object of scientific technology." This is biological Luddism. And, insofar as Ratzinger's intent is to influence civil society, self-defeating. No one is going to draw the line where the Vatican does—at the horizon, practically. Not even Catholics. Too many fences make for none.

The Vatican document is valuable, however, for identifying the moral dilemmas posed by the new reproductive technology and for examining the techniques in descending order of gravity: threats to the dignity of the individual, to the integrity of the family, and to the "unity" (perhaps ultimately to the utility) of sex. These distinctions can be useful for a secular society in formulating public policy. The liberal state, of course, does not and should not police all moral infractions. There is a vast distinction between morality and legality. The state's first duty is to protect life, and it is in this arena that it should exercise its full power. The great danger is the imminent advent of the age of fetal manipulation for purposes of treatment and research. A good place to begin resistance to that prospect is the 14-day rule.

Second, the liberal state has an interest in protecting the family and in discouraging practices that would weaken it. But it should protect or discourage by social policy, not by police power. True, the transfer of ova and sperm to and from third parties does produce distorted families. But these distorted families are produced in situations in which there otherwise would be no families. A desperate attempt to establish families by people who cannot otherwise have them suggests a moral ambiguity toward which the state should exercise leniency and tolerance. This is certainly true in the case of one type of technique for producing hybrid families, the transfer of biological materials. As for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the other, more offensive, technique—the use of surrogate gestators—the proper role of the state is tolerant discouragement: no overt interference with private arrangements, but a refusal by the state to enforce the contract, particularly the part that compels a surrogate gestator to give up her child.

Artificial children through fetal manipulation is a challenge to man's physical integrity. The artificial family is a challenge to a social institution. Artificial sex is a challenge to a personal relationship. That is something upon which congregations of the doctrine of the faith may pronounce authoritatively, but not the liberal state. That debate was staged a generation ago and the verdict is settled. For the state, that issue is a non-issue.

The Vatican document is more important for its tone than for its substance. Civil society, while discounting the theology, will appreciate the moral seriousness. But moral seriousness is not enough. We also need to attempt a moral calculus, in this case, weighing the pains of infertility against both the direct injuries of the new technologies and the risks of further injury in the future. "God made the angels to show him splendor," says Thomas More in Robert Bolt's *A Man For All Seasons*, "but man he made to serve him wittily, in the tangle of his mind." To avoid the horrors of the new reproductive science, our most important weapon may be nuance.

Big writers and little countries.

SNAP BOOKS

BY MICHAEL MASSING

"Joan got a big rap," Dunne says forcefully, "because she was only in El Salvador for two weeks. Two weeks is plenty of time if you know what you're looking for. . . ."

"I could have stayed in Salvador longer, and it wouldn't have done any good," Didion [says]. "I wouldn't have written the book. . . ."

"It's almost better to have a little less than a little more," Dunne explains.

—*New York Times Magazine*, profile of Joan Didion and John Gregory Dunne, February 8, 1987.

It was inevitable. In an era of instant expertise, spot analysis, and 15-minute celebrity, we now have the snap book. Snap books are produced by big-name authors who parachute into a country, take a quick look around, then write an entire book about their experience. The genre was established in 1983, when Joan Didion published *Salvador*. Now come two new entries: *The Jaguar Smile: A Nicaraguan Journey*, by India-born novelist Salman Rushdie, and *Another Day of Life*, by Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuściński.

Snap books have certain essential characteristics in common. One is a fashionable writer. Joan Didion may not know grenades from grenadine, but she is the best-selling author of *A Book of Common Prayer* and other novels. Salman Rushdie may never have set foot in Central America, but his acclaimed novels about life in South Asia make him a natural to examine the Nicaraguan revolution. And the publication of Ryszard Kapuściński's account of the civil war in Angola, which originally appeared in Poland in 1976, follows the surprising success of his earlier books, *The Emperor*, an account of the fall of Haile Selassie, and *Shah of Shahs*, which was excerpted in the *New Yorker*.

Snap-book writers don't need much time to become experts on the countries they visit. Didion required but two weeks to master the war in El Salvador, and Rushdie three to grasp the revolution in Nicaragua. Kapuściński spent a leisurely three months in Angola. Furthermore, the writer should not be too adept in the local language. (Didion speaks only rudimentary Spanish, and Rushdie none at all.)

In the end, though, snap-book writers are distinguished by one quality above all others: their ability to pad material. To qualify for hard covers, snap books must break the 100-page barrier. Assorted frontispieces and dedication pages can help (the 108-page *Salvador* doesn't begin until page 13), but a snap writer's success ultimately depends upon an aptitude for milking abbreviated visits. Each of these three authors gathered enough material for a decent magazine article, which they managed to stretch into a full book. For others contemplating their own snap books, here are some guidelines:

One white chick sitting around and talking. First, endow even the most commonplace activities with weighty significance. With a little imagination, even eating, walking, and sleeping can become events of great moment—and take up a lot of space in the process. Consider how Didion manages to transform a forgettable chat over a beer into a happening full of dark foreboding: "In the shadows beyond the table was a battered refrigerator from which, after a while, one of the priests got bottles of Pilsener beer, and we sat in the sedative half-light and drank the cold beer and talked in a desultory way about nothing in particular, about the situation, but no solutions."

continued on page 24

Michael Massing is a writer in New York.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The week we lived a life with cancer.

You know someone who's had cancer. An aunt, a cousin, a father or a close friend. Or maybe a wife and mother who "wanted to go to sleep and wake up and pretend it was just a dream."

But it wasn't a dream for Helen Bartlett. A person Newsweek walked beside during her harrowing medical and psychological odyssey. A person who shared her innermost thoughts and feelings with us.

And, because you experienced Helen's experiences as they happened, you found out what it means to be a cancer victim and live with the imminent threat of dying.

Helen Bartlett didn't make it. But in her 18-month battle, this courageous woman showed all of us what it means to live with cancer.

Finding out what it means, that's what Newsweek is all about and what our in-depth stories have always been about.

In our story on Hiroshima

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

© NEWSWEEK 1986

we told you what it means, after forty years, to live with the bomb still echoing in your mind.

In our special story on homosexuality, we showed you what a desperately lonely and tortured experience it still is to grow up gay in America.

And, in our National Magazine Award-winning report on Vietnam, we told you what it meant for 65 boys, in a company called Charlie, to come home to a silent, indifferent America.

Newsweek constantly lives with people whose lives have meaning to you. Reporting one-on-one about real human beings.

It's one of the reasons we've won more awards for excellence than any other newsweekly.

We speak in a human voice.

Newsweek.

Why it happened. What it means.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Kapuściński, stuck with a group of mute soldiers waiting for the dawn to come, offers this description: "The oil lamp is burning in the room; silence. Nobody wants to talk or even knows what to talk about. Everybody is waiting for the dawn, growing more enervated and sleepy. There is a sound of snoring from those asleep on the floor, and the dirge of the mosquitos. Sweat trickles down your face and your mouth is bitter from nicotine, dry and nauseating."

Honey, I can't find my steak! Snap writers should pay special attention to inconveniences such as power outages, water shortages, and bad roads. Such occurrences are routine enough in the Third World, but, with the appropriate self-dramatization, they can be turned into significant, even portentous events. In *Salvador*, for example, Didion and her husband are dining in a restaurant one night when the lights suddenly go out. For most Salvadorans, it's just another blackout. Not for Didion. Peering out from the restaurant's canopied porch, she spots two people in the street—one in a car, the other at a gas station, clutching a rifle. Nothing further happens, and Didion completes her dinner by candlelight. Yet she masterfully extracts a fat paragraph from the incident, capping it with a textbook example of snap-book insight: "I did not forget the sensation of having been in a single instant demoralized, undone, humiliated by fear, which is what I meant when I said that I came to understand in El Salvador the mechanism of terror."

IN *The Jaguar Smile* Rushdie one day takes a ride into northern Nicaragua. The trip comes off without incident, but Rushdie skillfully turns it into a drawn-out escapade full of danger and derring-do. A few days earlier, he notes, 32 people were killed by a *contra* mine placed on the very road he is now traveling. Rushdie asks his driver if there's any way to detect a mine in advance. He says there is not, and Rushdie, heightening the sense of drama, observes that "my breakfast of rice and beans . . . began to crow noisily in my stomach." Vultures appear by the side of the road and clouds shroud the mountaintops. Suddenly they come upon a tree lying across the road. "Was this it?" he writes. "Was this where *contra* fiends with machetes between their teeth would burst from the foliage, and goodbye [Indian writer]?" It turns out to be just a tree across the road.

Getting there is half the book. As the Rushdie passage might indicate, transportation is full of excellent snap-book opportunities. And it's a good thing, for getting around can be time-consuming, especially for people on tight schedules. So, wherever possible, snap-book writers should write about the act of travel itself. Kapuściński gives a superb demonstration of how it's done. In *Another Day of Life* he is forever showing up in cars, jeeps, and trucks, crisscrossing the vast Angolan bush. The landscape is incredibly monotonous, but Kapuściński has an uncanny ability to vary his description of it:

* "The road from Luanda to Benguela passes through six hundred kilometers of desert terrain, flat and nondescript. A haphazard medley of stones, frumpy dry bushes, dirty sand, and broken road signs creates a gray and incoherent landscape."
* "Time is passing, but we seem to be stuck in place. Constantly the same glimmering seam of asphalt laid on the loose red earth. Constantly the same faded, cracked wall of bush. The same blinding white sky. The same emptiness of a deserted world, an emptiness that betrays life neither by movement nor by voice."
* "All around, for scores, for hundreds of kilometers, stretches the barren bush, without water, without reference points—an unappeased wilderness of millions of barbed branches woven into walls, a hostile world not to be conquered, not to be penetrated."
* "We rode in a Toyota jeep driven by Antonio, a sixteen-year-old soldier. A dazzling brilliance, a lake of pulsing light that moved forward, settled above the pavement. . . . The jeep was traveling along the road through a landscape so monotonous that we seemed to be standing still."

In *Salvador* Didion hears of combat in Morazán province and decides to go for a look. She fails to find anything, but rather than write off the day as a bust, she expertly transforms the trip into a breathless adventure. First, there is the wait on the runway as the airplane receives a tuneup. (". . . We watched the tinkering without comment until one and finally both of the engines turned over.") The plane eventually takes off, and Didion, alone with her thoughts during the 25-minute flight, relates her impressions. ("Once in the air I was struck, as always in Salvador, by the miniature aspect of the country, an entire republic smaller than some California counties (smaller than San Diego County, smaller than Kern or Inyo, smaller by two-and-a-half times than San Bernardino) . . . ") She lands at the airport and shares a taxi with a laconic local woman. (". . . Although she and I sat on a single bucket seat, [she] did not speak, only stared straight ahead, clutching her bag with one hand and trying with the other to keep her skirt pulled over her black lace slip.") She reaches a river and watches as the cab is transported across. ("It did not seem entirely promising, but there it was, and there, in due time, we were: in the river, first following the sandbar in a wide crescent, then off the bar, stuck, the engine dead. The taxi rocked gently in the current.") They get across without incident.

EIGHTY MILES and four pages after setting out, Didion reaches Gotera, her destination. Nothing much happens here either. She can't locate her contact, a colonel, or find an army patrol that might take her to the fighting. There's nothing to do but wait. In *Salvador* she describes what it was like: "When I think now of that day in Gotera I think mainly of waiting, hanging around, waiting outside the [barracks] . . . and waiting outside the church and waiting outside the Cine Morazán. . . . We stood in the sun and tried to avoid adverse attention. We drank Coca-Cola and made surreptitious notes." Finally, it's time to go. Didion lends her frustrations an air of mystery: "In the end no patrol went up and the colonel never came back . . . and nothing came of the day but overheard rumors, indefinite

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

observations, fragments of information that might or might not fit into a pattern we did not perceive." In *Salvador*, the day takes up ten full pages.

Chapter III: My pen runs out of ink. Didion's Morazán trip helps unlock the key to really successful snap-book writing. When visiting foreign countries, writers must inevitably contend with a lot of dead ends—trips that don't come together, interviews that fall through, leads that don't pan out. It would never occur to the average journalist to mention such things in his final text. But snap-book writers, anxious to expand their manuscripts, recognize that their professional mishaps conceal a gold mine. Assume you lose your research materials. This might seem a matter of purely personal concern, but, with the right degree of melodrama, the event can be folded nicely into your account. Here is a good example, from *Another Day of Life*: "I drop by the room and find that [the maid] has packed my bag herself. And where are the newspaper clippings that I have been collecting for three months, my greatest treasure? Where are the clippings? She threw them into the toilet and flushed them!"

Fail to gain admittance to a meeting? Go ahead and write it up: "I asked someone to drive me to the edge of the city, to Moro da Luz, where the MPLA headquarters was located in the former residence of the French consul. But the staff was meeting and the sentry didn't want to admit me." Even superfluous note-taking can make for good copy, as in this passage from *Salvador*: "Sweat from my hand kept blurring my tally of empty troop trucks, and I copied it on a clean page, painstakingly, as if it mattered."

GIVEN THE pressure of time, you'll probably encounter problems verifying information. A useful way out is to present your failure as signifying some deeper truth about the country at hand. Didion really hits her stride here:

* "Actual information was hard to come by in El Salvador, perhaps because this is not a culture in which a high value is placed on the definite. . . ."
* "All numbers in El Salvador tended to materialize and vanish and rematerialize in a different form. . . . At any given time in El Salvador, a great deal of what goes on is considered ineffable. . . ."
* ". . . the crash of this particular helicopter became, like everything else in Salvador, an occasion of rumor, doubt, suspicion, conflicting reports, and finally a kind of listless uneasiness."

Interviews can also be a good source of material—even if they don't come through. "I never met Major D'Aubuisson, but I was always interested in the adjectives used to describe him," writes Didion. If you do get a big interview but find little worth quoting, try lending the occasion a poetic cast. Here's how Kapuściński describes his meeting with President Neto: "I knew that things were going badly, I wanted to learn the details from him, but at the same time I didn't feel up to asking him questions that would hurt. So there was silence and then I said goodbye and left."

"Please, don't let me stop you." If you're really hurting for space, it's best to let your interviews run on. Avoid shaping your transcripts and, whenever possible, record your own questions verbatim. Using this approach, Rushdie manages to expand an unremarkable interview with Daniel Ortega into 13 pages. ("I asked: 'Who was responsible for the attack on the *contra* in Tegucigalpa today?' ") His interview with *La Prensa* owner Violeta Chamorro goes on for nine pages. ("I asked: 'How can you say that the paper is the same as it always used to be, when three-quarters of your journalists quit and started up a rival daily?' ") As Rushdie shows, you should feel free to relay even the most outlandish claims as fact. Thus, Vice President Sergio Ramírez tells him, "Nobody who stayed in Nicaragua to work his land had it confiscated. Since our absolute priorities are production and defense, why should we meddle with someone who is producing? On the contrary, we assist many large, private landowners."

In ordinary journalism, of course, Rushdie would feel compelled to test Ramírez's assertion by seeking out some private landowners. But that's the wonderful thing about being a renowned novelist writing a snap book—you needn't seek out all sides of an issue. In fact, you needn't worry much about issues at all. "Don't say I said this, but there are no issues here," someone tells Didion in *Salvador*, and she seems to take the person at his word. Ideology, politics, and history count for little in these volumes. For snap books are not really about a particular country or political upheaval, but about the writer himself.

What really distinguishes snap books from other genres is not so much their length as their self-consciousness. They are the creation of individuals who, thrust into a wrenching world of death squads and land mines, profess to know terror through having been forced to eat dinner in the dark. In snap books, war and revolution serve primarily as backdrops against which star writers can shine.

THUS, WHEN wrapping up your snap book, you should spend less time drawing conclusions about your visit than giving a detailed description of your trip home. You can concentrate on various aspects here: (1) Going-away presents. Kapuściński: "Pablo gave me a box of cigars for the road. Comandante Ju-Ju gave me Davidson's book on Angola," etc. (2) The ride to the airport. Didion: "I was picked up to go to the airport that morning by one of the embassy vans, and a few blocks from the hotel I was seized by the conviction that this was not the most direct way to the airport, that this was not an embassy guard sitting in front with the Remington on his lap; that this was someone else. That the van turned out in fact to be the embassy van, detouring into San Benito to pick up an AID official, failed to relax me. . . ." (3) Plane conversations. Rushdie: "On the plane home I sat beside a Nicaraguan woman with a soft face, thick spectacles, and a streaming cold," and so on for the whole of the last chapter, which is titled, "Silvia: An Epilogue."

Finally, get some Lomotil, pack a Berlitz guide, and make sure your safari suit is well-pressed. The rest should be a snap. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Comedy, Sharp and Otherwise

The prime fact about *Hollywood Shuffle* is that it exists. This statement would be true of any independently made low-budget debut (*Hollywood Shuffle* was reportedly made for $100,000 plus credits). It's even truer of an independent feature on black subjects with an almost all black cast. And it's still truer when the tone of the film is sharply satirical of both blacks and whites (and, to some degree, Hispanics).

Hollywood Shuffle
(Samuel Goldwyn)
Making Mr. Right
(Orion)
Personal Services
(Vestron)

Written and directed by Robert Townsend with himself in the leading role, this picture joins two other recent black satires: Spike Lee's film *She's Gotta Have It* and a collection of theater sketches, *The Colored Museum* by George C. Wolfe, recently produced at the Public Theater in New York and soon to move to the Royal Court in London. It takes more than three swallows to make a sociological summer, but these pieces certainly convey that at least some black artists think that black audiences feel sufficiently secure to relish the scourgings of satire. Also, these three pieces appear when it's painfully clear, from Howard Beach and other events, that the supposed improvement in American race relations is, to a frightening degree, cosmetic. Townsend and Lee and Wolfe don't clarify much about the state of race relations: their real contribution, complex and valuable, is to make the subject more mysterious.

Townsend plays a Hollywood film aspirant (his character's name is Robert Taylor!), with a sweet girlfriend and a job in a fast-food place, who is trying hard to get a part in a picture. His struggles to find work, his success in finding it, his ultimate rejection of the role because his director is forcing a black caricature on him—these form the strand on which a lot of skits, fantasies, and straight scenes are hung.

Many of them are funny. One sketch is a TV commercial for a black acting school with white instructors who teach young blacks how to play pimps, drug peddlers, slaves, and rapists. Another sketch is about two film critics on TV who have a show called "Sneakin' into the Movies," on which they give thumbs up or down to (parodic) movies they have managed to sneak into. Later, a producer's waiting room is filled with male black actors readying their Eddie Murphy imitations. The white producer, director, and writer who employ Townsend are nauseating in their proprietary understanding of blackness. In a quarrel, Taylor cows a black bully into shivers by grabbing his hair "activator"—the spray that makes his hair uncurl.

Nobody goes completely unscathed in this lively, knowledgeable film. If it has a theme other than its satirical intent toward stupidity and pretense, it's a grim one. In one of the few serious scenes, Townsend's uncle, who was once a pop singer and now sweeps out a barber shop, urges him to hold fast to his dream. What the uncle omits is what the film finally says: a black's dream isn't worth holding on to if the only way to realize it is by bowing to white strictures. It's a film about black self-deceptions as well as the black self, deceptions at the price of pride.

Townsend is not a prepossessing actor, but he's clever. His impersonations, from Stepin Fetchit to jive-ass, are witty. His script, co-written with Keenen Ivory Wayans (who plays the bully), is less a screenplay than a vaudeville bill. His direction reveals his budget limitations but also enough gift to keep a picture moving. The large cast ranges from veterans, such as Helen Martin, who plays his grandmother, to people who are apparently only his friends and well-wishers.

In 1982 Susan Seidelman made *her* debut with a small, pungent film called *Smithereens*. She was then able to move on—up, up and away from authenticity—with *Desperately Seeking Susan* (1985), a big-budget reworking of *Smithereens* with all the nasty truths painted over. Now this desperately seeking Susan has come up with a comic contraption called *Making Mr. Right*. I have no clue about whether it will be box office, but if it's not, it was an even more dreadful waste of time because it was made to sell tickets. (Yes, all films are made to sell tickets, but a few also have other reasons for being.)

The script by Floyd Byars and Laurie Frank—I can hardly believe this as I say it—is about a scientist in a Florida lab who makes an android, a facsimile of himself, to be used in space exploration and about how the man and the android are mistaken for each other. Identity confusion, familiar since Plautus, is here extended from twins to include a maker and the being he has made. The mistakes in identity include, as you might just possibly expect, bed episodes.

John Malkovich, who has done some good acting (*Places in the Heart, The Killing Fields*), plays the double role and is much more taking as the android. He suggests

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Man Facing Southeast. Exceptional Argentine film. The script, about a man in a mental hospital who claims to be from outer space, is adequate; acting and visuals are extraordinary. (Reviewed 4/6/87)

Outrageous Fortune. Shelley Long and Bette Midler, one delicate, the other daffy, in a nicely improbable spy chase with crackling dialogue. (3/2/87)

Prick Up Your Ears. Both the life of the English playwright Joe Orton and the investigation of that life by his biographer, John Lahr. Grim story, sardonically told. Acting, writing, direction absolutely first-rate. (4/20/87)

Swimming to Cambodia. Spalding Gray's engaging one-man show, about his small role in *The Killing Fields* and what he saw and learned because of it. Jonathan Demme directs with ingenious reticence. (3/23/87)

SK

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Peter Sellers in *Being There*. The rest of the cast needs no notice except the leading female role, a public relations woman, played with vulgarity and amateurishness by Ann Magnuson.

Vulgarity permeates the whole film—its color, its writing, its acting, its suppliant direction—directing that begs for yoks and sex titillation. The question of Seidelman's future becomes less and less interesting.

Personal Services is the third film about a brothel within two months. This one is English and is easily the worst of the lot. At the start we are told that this is not the life of Cynthia Payne, a well-known London madam. This disclaimer is the neatest touch in the picture.

The biggest disappointment for me was the direction by Terry Jones, a member of Monty Python, who directed for them two of my favorite films in recent years, *The Life of Brian* and *The Meaning of Life*. The opening shot of *Personal Services* is a toilet. Then we see some more stills of a tawdry little flat. Then we cut to a cheap restaurant where Julie Walters works as a waitress. The restaurant sequence is so rushed in movement and speech that it takes a while before we understand that Walters is the tenant of the flat first shown us and that she has connections with the "game."

Her connections intensify as expenses mount and she needs more money, especially to take care of her 14-year-old son, who is off at school. By the end of the film, long free of waitressing, she is a prospering madam.

The picture is a mess: principally because the screenplay by David Leland never decides whether it's a cool send-up of conventional morality à la Joe Orton, an exposé of the drabness of the "game," or a serious drama about the matters that drove Walters into the life. After the breeziness of the women in the opening sequences and the comic pathos of most of the customers, the encounter between Walters and her father at her sister's wedding is dark psychodrama—murky in fact. At the picture's close her disapproving father, long widowed, himself appears at her brothel, asking for a woman. Walters ushers him up to the woman who has just, at Walters's request, initiated Walters's son as a 15th-birthday present. This is the low point of the picture's exploitation-as-candor.

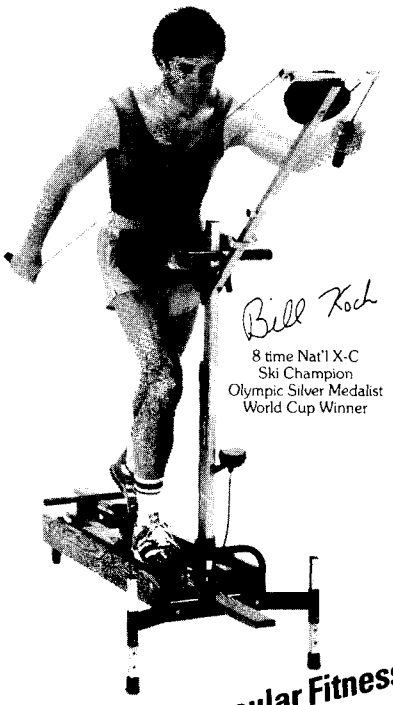
Jones is never at ease with this unfocused script. Walters, previously hard to take in *Educating Rita*, is even less appealing, more actressy here. But Alec McCowen, usually an obvious actor, is surprisingly good as the hearty retired Wing Commander who is one of the brothel's gamiest and most gamesome clients.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Snarls, Continued

When last heard from, I was snarling from a sick room, having been immobilized by a bout of pneumonia. My illness eventually proved more serious than anticipated, requiring some surgery, so for an additional six weeks I was again a prisoner of bedclothes. I mention this not to inveigle get-well cards out of you (I'm almost totally recovered) but rather to explain to those who may have noticed my absence from this column why I missed everything that opened between mid-February and mid-April, and why instead of reviewing plays I'm once again reduced to fulminating about issues in that grouchy mood induced by convalescence.

The British Conquest. To judge from newspapers and newsmagazines, Broadway is healthy again, thanks to a pair of blockbuster musicals from Britain. Critical opinion is divided over which of these extravaganzas is more sublime (British critics prefer *Starlight Express*, American critics like *Les Misérables*), and I'm obviously in no position to judge. Who cares anyway? Both of these monumental money machines were guaranteed hits long before they even opened, with advance sales in the millions. Where critics *have* been developing a consensus (Frank Rich's article "The Empire Strikes Back" is the required reading here) is over how Britain has managed to conquer Broadway in its last remaining stronghold. Traditionally the



Builds Cardiovascular Fitness More Effectively Than Other Exercisers

NordicTrack duplicates the smooth, rhythmic motion of cross-country skiing, recognized by health authorities as the most effective fitness-building exercise available.

- **Exclusive Flywheel Action**
  Provides unmatched smoothness and continuity from stride to stride. Motion and resistances are the same as real skiing.
- **Jarless Action is Safer Than Running**
  Completely jarless motion prevents back and joint injuries associated with running. Arm-motion resistances provide superior upper body exercise.
- **More Complete Than Exercise Bikes**
  Adds important upper body exercise and exercises leg muscles more uniformly. Fitness-building high pulse rates are easier to attain because more muscles share the exercise.
- **Safer and More Effective Than Rowing Machines**
  Safer because no dangerous back strain loads imposed. Scientific tests prove NordicTrack's skiing motion is superior to rowing for building fitness.
- **Burns up to 600 Calories per 20-Minute Workout**
  Lose weight without dieting.

Folds compactly. Requires only 15" x 17" floor space.

Free Brochure, and New Video!
800-328-5888
Minnesota 612-448-6987

NordicTrack
141NR Jonathan Blvd. N., Chaska, MN 55318

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

proud possession of Americans, the musical is now entirely dominated by composers, lyricists, designers, and directors from the other side of the ocean.

The explanations offered for this are intriguing: the English have learned how to substitute spectacle for story; they know how to exploit rock conventions on the stage; they understand the secret of substituting trance-inducing rhythms for a lyrical score. Since theatergoers are happy and theater owners are back in business again, it's no doubt pettish of me to raise objections. But my own conclusion after reading about these developments is not that the British have conquered Broadway. It is that Broadway has totally debauched the British. If anyone had prophesied, 20 years ago, that the man responsible for staging the top four West End and Broadway musicals of the '80s was going to be the artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, he would have been pilloried for impugning the integrity of British culture. Yet the theater wonder who brings us *Cats*, *Les Misérables*, *Starlight Express*, *Chess*, and who knows what everlasting triumphs to come, is none other than Trevor Nunn of the RSC. I know it's considered tasteless to begrudge artists the kind of earnings commanded by chief executive officers of the Fortune 500. Still, Nunn's income and stock participation are such that they might even bring a glint of envy to the eyes of Ivan Boesky. The trade magazine *Variety*—calling Nunn "the new Midas of Legit"—estimates that at a bare minimum he is pulling down $100,000 a week (or over five million a year) in fees and royalties alone.

It was for such activities that both Nunn and Peter Hall of the National Theatre were assailed last spring in the British press for enriching themselves at the expense of their companies. Protesting that their companies profited too, both responded with libel suits against Rupert Murdoch's Sunday *Times*, though each eventually relinquished his subsidized theater post to pursue free-lance activities (Nunn remains with the RSC as a consultant). In an article last fall, I too criticized this kind of commercial moonlighting, comparing it to the absenteeism of certain American artistic directors who use non-profit theaters as a means of Broadway transportation. But I had no idea at the time how far-reaching were the implications. Now Nunn has virtually abandoned serious company work in order to manufacture musical epics, putting his considerable staging prowess entirely in service to emotional manipulation—as if Meyerhold had formed a permanent alliance with Victor Herbert. In retrospect, even *Nicholas Nickleby* begins to look like a rehearsal for such epics as *Les Misérables*—if produced today you could bet it would have an Andrew Lloyd-Webber score. It was in *Nicholas Nickleby* that we first encountered Nunn's indignation against an abstraction called "social injustice" (remember Roger Rees waving his fist at us as we filed into Shubert Alley?). This, we are told, is also the chief theme of *Les Misérables*. Now that Nunn has garnered so many financial prizes, the only thing left for him, apparently, is the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award (perhaps he'll consider tithing his royalties).

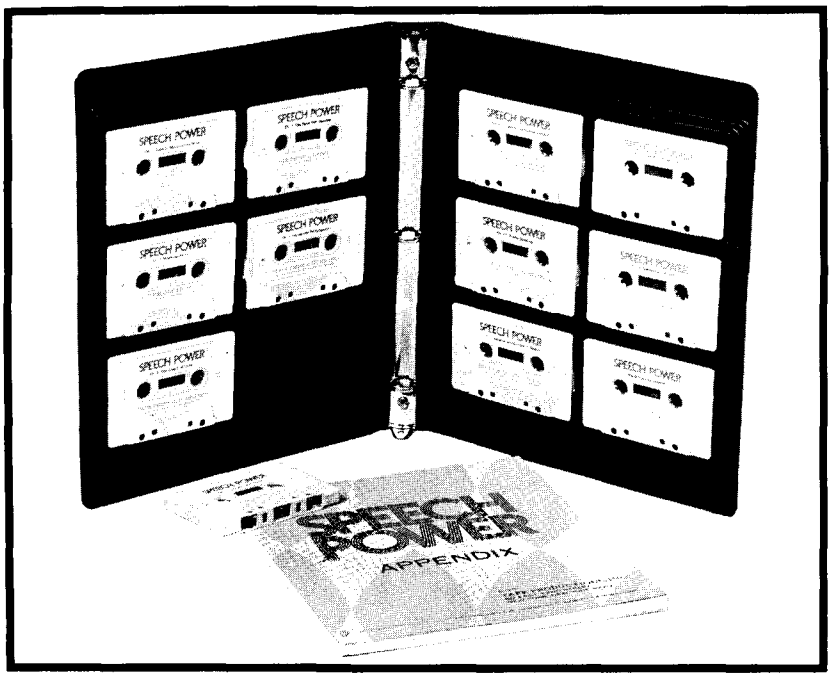
As a critic for a London paper in 1972-73, during Nunn's early years at the RSC, I first noticed how a theater that the once idealistic Peter Hall had built into a powerful and simple Brechtian mechanism had turned into an instrument for showy theater machinery, stage design, and massive crowd scenes under his successor. In hindsight, Nunn's Stratford production of *Titus Andronicus*, with its ostentatious engineering and Cecil B. De Mille battle paraphernalia, seems to have predicted *Cats*, with its Steven Spielberg spaceships and epic junk piles. But nothing in those early days suggested that the RSC would eventually develop a partnership with the West End, producing musicals and plays as auditions for Broadway. Nor does the RSC seem in any way reformed by Nunn's departure. At this very moment, the company is touring *Kiss Me Kate* in the provinces, while its rival, the National Theatre—inspired by what already appears to be the triumphantly mediocre vision of Hall's successor, Ronald Eyre—is preparing a series of American musical comedy revivals for the fall.

Under Laurence Olivier, the National Theatre occasionally produced some musical froth. But in those days this sort of thing was a holiday for a company devoted to Shakespeare, Ibsen, and new British drama. Today the state-supported companies are taking holidays most of the year, expending their energies in developing produce for commercial markets. Reading Joe Orton's fascinating diaries (newly edited by John Lahr), and hearing him bitch about the British theater of the mid-'60s, I was nevertheless struck again by how committed were its playwrights, directors, designers, and actors; how ambitious its goals and aspirations. Although subsidized plays and productions sometimes found their way onto the West End stage, British companies of the time felt no compulsion to design their wares for commercial consumption, and as a matter of fact few were ever successful on the commercial stage. Pinter's *The Homecoming* in its brilliant RSC production, for example, was stopped in its tracks on Broadway by Walter Kerr, while Orton's own *Entertaining Mr. Sloane* enjoyed a run of only 13 performances, like all of his New York productions a dismal failure.

By contrast, what passes today for "serious drama" on the Broadway stage are the brittle comedies of Tom Stoppard that come to us courtesy of the National Theatre, along with the middlebrow pretensions of Peter Shaffer and the domestic farces of Michael Frayn, while the Royal Shakespeare Company is busy sending us musicals. American producers (not to mention American critics) visit London regularly to shop for potential Broadway hits; and the British theater, both commercial and subsidized, responds by trying to manufacture a potentially satisfying product. Under these circumstances, I don't think it is churlish to ask: Who has conquered whom? Has the empire struck back—or struck out?

The question is important because the conduct of the English theater has always had an important ripple effect on our own. The state-subsidized British repertory system, with its devotion to classical plays and new works normally scorned by commercial producers, was one of the chief models for the budding American resident theater movement. Now the majority of non-profit theaters both in England and the United States have abandoned their original goals to become launching pads for marketable commodities and partners in commercial production. Without models, aspiration crumbles and definitions become cloudy; and with the disintegration of the British repertory model, there are precious few theaters left in the English-speaking world where artists can feel valued for themselves and not for their capacity to generate profits, publicity, and royalties. Admittedly, there are persuasive economic reasons for this deterioration in the original purpose and ideals of the art theater movement—principally the drastic cuts in theater subsidies under Thatcher

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Learn the art of sparkling conversation and never be at a loss for words again

SPEECH POWER

Did you ever notice that some people always know the right thing to say in social and business situations? They're popular, they're humorous; people seek them out at business and social gatherings because they're fun to be with.

Now you can command the same kind of influence that helps people hold the attention of others . . . obtain the business they want because they can persuade people about themselves. In just 12 half-hour Speech Power lessons, you'll learn how to:

- Create icebreakers for every conversational situation
- Gracefully hold your own in debate or conversation
- Skillfully employ humor in your conversation
- Eliminate undesirable expressions from your speech

This uniquely effective program dramatizes real-life situations and lets you listen to the speech of famous personalities to show you how to quickly break through the barriers to effective communication. Here are the key sections to this exciting, entertaining, self-improvement course:

1. Speech: Mirror of the Mind
2. The Great Human Achievement
3. The Pause that Repulses
4. Speak Up
5. Breaking the Ice
6. Everyday Talking
7. Formal and Polite Speech
8. Telephone Speech
9. The Speech of Love
10. Vocabulary
11. Those Foreign Words!
12. Four-Letter Words and Slang
13. Dialects and Standard Speech
14. The Power of Humor
15. The Art of Listening
16. Body Speech
17. Public Speaking
18. Persuasive Speech
19. Debates and Arguments
20. Misleading Speech: Speech and the Law
21. Character and Culture in Speech
22. When to Stop Talking

(Each chapter is self-contained so that you can concentrate on subjects in any order you prefer.)

Course Contents:
Twelve Audiocassettes
Looseleaf Workbook
Price $99.95

learn INCORPORATED Dept. CZ-32, 113 Gaither Drive, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054-9987

Please send me Speech Power at the special price of $99.95 plus $6 postage and handling.

If I'm not completely satisfied, I can return it in its original condition within 15 days for a full refund. No questions asked.

Check the method of payment below: NJ Residents add 6% sales tax.

☐ Check or money order enclosed (payable to Learn Incorporated)
☐ Charge my credit card ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Card #_____ Exp. Date_____

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Signature_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and Reagan, and the selfish atmosphere of entrepreneurship and careerism encouraged by conservative governments. It is tough enough to live with the greed, blunders, insensitivity, meanspiritedness, opportunism, stupidity, and corruption of a bad time. But when our traditional defenses—the consolations of art and the perceptions of artists who might analyze and challenge these conditions honestly—are neutralized, then patience and hope begin to fade.

A Life At The Barricades

Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the 20th Century by Sidney Hook

(Harper & Row, 628 pp., $29.95)

Sidney Hook has been a valuable citizen. He has applied a lucid and efficient logical mind to a wide range of problems in politics, education, culture, and philosophy. He has been an illuminating analyst and clarifier of Marxism, a brave and trenchant anti-Stalinist when the going was rough. I cannot judge his work in technical philosophy, but *The Hero in History* is a first-rate essay in the philosophy of history. Hook has lived a long and productive life; he is still writing away in his 80s at the Hoover Institution, and has now delivered himself of this 600-page autobiography.

Out of Step is essentially a political and intellectual memoir. It deals with Hook's personal life and philosophical ideas only as they bear on political events and on broad intellectual issues. The book is discursive, and on occasion repetitious; but it is clearly and forcefully written in the familiar Hook style. It contains pungent sketches of people encountered along the way. One remembers especially his portraits of John Dewey (next to the author, he is the book's hero), of Morris Cohen, of Bertrand Russell, of Arthur Koestler. Hook provides an interesting account of intellectual and academic life in New York City during angry and turbulent times. Some have challenged Hook's recollection of particular events and quarrels, but nobody's memory is perfect.

Still, Hook's life and this book raise two possibly related questions. The more obvious question is how and why this man who began as a Marxist radical ended up as a supporter of Nixon and Reagan. The more difficult question is why this doughty rationalist with so much to his credit is so bitter. For underneath the reasoned surface of the text throbs a repressed rage. This is not a life recollected in tranquillity. Of course Hook is one of the notable polemicists of the age; he admits to the "joy of combat in what I felt was a righteous cause," and much of his polemical zeal has been bracing and healthy in its impact. But in the (and his) '80s, he still fights the old battles with the old wrath. He has a long memory, and he seems to have forgotten no slight or grievance. *Out of Step* bristles with barely controlled resentments and rancors.

Most of this bitterness springs from his impassioned anti-communism. Hook was everlastingly right in his detestation of Stalinism. He argued coolly and courageously against the Communists and their fellow travelers at a time when that was a lot less easy to do than it is today. Younger scholars show a bizarre tendency these days to invest the American Communists of the 1930s and '40s with glamour and heroism. In fact, most decent Communists left the Party in 1939 after Stalin's pact with Hitler. Those who remained, having swallowed the trials, the purges, and now the pact, were mostly a collection of sycophantic apologists for everything that Stalin and the Soviet Union proposed or did. In 1941-45 the indispensable contribution the Soviet Union made to the defeat of Hitler erased past sins, and gave American Communists after the war a mild influence in the labor movement and the intellectual community—an influence they devoted, as always, to unconditional defense of the Soviet Union.

I was at Hook's side in some of those battles after the war, and I rejoiced with him as he struck down the infidel. But he has been wrong, I believe, in letting anti-communism consume his life to the point that, like Aaron's rod, it has swallowed up nearly everything else. It is this obsession, I think, that explains his steady drift to the right. He finds more security and vindication in the indiscriminate anti-communism of Ronald Reagan than in what seem to him the dangerous vacillations of liberals who detect changes in the Soviet Union or who worry about nuclear war.

Looking back, Hook considerably exaggerates the power of American Communists—an overestimate that, ironically, he shares with the young historians of the New Left. He speaks of Communist influence in the 1930s as "so strong that it amounted to domination of key areas of American cultural life, in literature, art, and movies." The Communist popular-front organizations, he writes, "dominated the cultural, literary, and in part the academic landscape." And again: "The climate of opinion in American liberal and literary circles with respect to the [Moscow] Trials, until the Nazi-Soviet pact of August 1939, remained overwhelmingly favorable to the Soviet Union." All this gives the Communists far too much credit. His own evidence refutes his drastic generalizations.

In May 1939, more than three months before the Nazi-Soviet pact, Hook organized the Committee for Cultural Freedom, and published an eloquent manifesto signed by 96 writers and artists in "defense of creative and intellectual freedom" against "the totalitarian idea" as "enthroned in Germany, Italy, Russia, Japan, and Spain." In August, a fortnight before the pact, a fellow-traveling group calling itself the Committee of 400 put out a statement denouncing Hook's committee for encouraging "the fantastic falsehood that the U.S.S.R. and the totalitarian states are basically alike." But in fact the *Daily Worker* could come up with only 167 signers of the Committee of 400 manifesto. And a comparison of the names attached to the two documents shows that the Committee for Cultural Freedom attracted an incomparably more distinguished list of people than the collection of (mostly) hacks and dupes who signed the statement of the Committee of 400. This incident, which Hook relates with justifiable pride, hardly suggests the Communist domination of the intellectual scene that he claims elsewhere.

One trouble, I fear, is that when Hook talks about America he really means New York City. "I have spent my life in universities," he writes, "but (except in a few rare circles) I have never found the intellectual excitement, the total engagement in issues, and the resolute attention

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to detail that characterized the debates of these uncouth, undisciplined New York intellectuals." He remains forever in the New York City trenches of the 1930s fighting the Stalinists. And he retains the spitefulness that marked factional disputes among New York intellectuals.

THERE APPEAR to be two sorts of people attracted to communism and thereafter disillusioned by it. Some, like Hook, are transfixed by the Communist issue for all their lives. Some decide that they have other lives to live, and they live them, refusing to let their Communist episode dictate the rest of their years. Arthur Koestler finally turned his back on politics altogether, and resumed the scientific speculations of his youth. In the United States, Richard Rovere, James Wechsler, Murray Kempton, and Theodore Draper kept their political and intellectual balance, becoming liberals rather than reactionaries, concluding that there were more things in heaven and earth than were dreamed of in the anti-communist philosophy.

One can understand Hook's resentment against the Stalinists. It is harder to understand his resentment against the anti-Stalinists who declined to make anti-communism the permanent center of their lives. Thus Irving Howe's autobiography is "replete with bare-faced inventions"; Norman Mailer "would forgive murder"; Mary McCarthy has "an almost infinite capacity for self-deception"; Nicolas Nabokov had "the morals of an alley cat"; Alfred Kazin "has reconstructed his political past to make it fit the prejudices of the current literary Establishment"; Eleanor Roosevelt "could never distinguish between the rhetoric and reality of communism," and regarded Communists as "liberals in a hurry." That was the same Eleanor Roosevelt who wrote about the Communists in *My Day* on June 22, 1945: "For years, in this country, they taught the philosophy of the lie. . . . Because I have experienced the deception of the American Communists, I will not trust them." (She sounds rather like Sidney Hook.)

For all his praise of New York intellectuals, Hook is even scornful about the "radical comedians" of the anti-Stalinist *Partisan Review*, to which he himself contributed, dismissing them as "peripheral and parasitic to the genuine movements for change in the social and political life of the country." One wonders whether Hook has not been pretty peripheral himself. The New Deal gets only a few passing mentions; the CIO bobs up in *Out of Step* far less than the CIA; the civil rights movement is rebuked for carrying affirmative action too far; the women's rights movement hardly exists for him.

One contemplates the career of Sidney Hook, then, with a mixture of respect and regret. In his day he performed great services in exposing the deceit, the fraudulence, the folly of Communists and fellow travelers. We remain in his debt for that. But in the end he is like Hawthorne's Hollingsworth, one of those men

> who have surrendered themselves to an overruling purpose. It does not so much impel them from without, nor even operate as a motive power within, but grows incorporate with all that they think and feel, and finally converts them into little else save that one principle. . . . They will keep no friend, unless he make himself the mirror of his purposes; they will smite and slay you, and trample your dead corpse under foot, if you take the first step with them, and cannot take the second, and the third, and every other step of their terribly straight path.

I must add that I have no personal complaint. Hook's references to me are friendly and just; and my references to him come out of a genuine sense of indebtedness, and of ancient regard and friendship. But as one who used to be attacked as a red-baiter himself (and who makes no apology for the writings that provoked such denunciations), I plead that there are indeed more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in the anti-Communist philosophy.

ARTHUR SCHLESINGER JR.

Arthur Schlesinger Jr. holds the Albert Schweitzer Chair in the Humanities at the City University of New York.

HEAVEN CAN WAIT

Liberation Theology: Essential Facts About the Revolutionary Religious Movement in Latin America and Beyond by Phillip Berryman

(Temple University Press, 231 pp., $24.95, Pantheon paperback, $6.95)

Fidel and Religion: Castro Talks on Revolution and Religion with Frei Betto

(Simon and Schuster, 300 pp., $19.95)

Will It Liberate? Questions About Liberation Theology by Michael Novak

(Paulist Press, 311 pp., $14.95)

"Leninism," John Maynard Keynes once observed, "is a combination of two things which Europeans have kept for some centuries in different compartments of the soul—religion and business." From business, Leninism borrowed its tendency to analyze the world in economic terms; from religion, its dogmatism, its intolerance, its "missionary ardor." For Keynes, who preferred that questions of faith and questions of finance be kept as far apart as possible, it seemed like an appalling combination. Still, his observation of the fundamentally religious character of Marxism is suggestive. Of course Marx pretended to have raised political economy to the status of science. But Marxism's rhetoric, indeed its underlying assumptions, have operated in history much like the secular equivalent of apocalyptic religion. The vast philosophical differences between Marxism and religion notwithstanding, this modern ideology triumphed largely as a faith. A look at history shows that the much vaunted anti-religious bias of nearly every Marxist experiment—from the Soviet Union to the People's Republic to Castro's Cuba—has not stood in the way of this new form of religious politics.

Indeed, the new faith of the anti-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

clerics has even found a use, and a kind of commonality of spirit, in the old faith of the clerics. In an era when rationalism and materialism seemed indissolubly linked with progress, this anticlericalism worked to Marxism's benefit, at least among the intellectual classes. But in the late 20th century, and particularly in Latin America, that link was broken, and Marxism seemed to pay a price. Its moral and philosophical credibility eroded as its "scientific" prognoses about capitalism's tendencies toward crisis, and about the end of class conflict under socialism, proved to be false, and as its practice proved murderous. Moreover, it dawned on revolutionary movements in developing societies that in cutting themselves off from Christianity they were depriving themselves of the deepest symbolic resources in Latin American culture. It was that ideological self-impoverishment, more than any program of the Alliance for Progress, that kept the "Cuban experiment" contained in Cuba.

Since the late 1960s, Liberation Theology has emerged as one of the most extended and thoughtful attempts to integrate Keynes's "two compartments of the soul." It seeks, briefly, to revise Marxist theory in light of Christian faith. Building upon the "political theology" that was current in Germany in the 1960s, it would redefine Christianity in terms of social praxis. In Latin America, home to almost half of all the Catholics in the world, Liberation Theology has become the accepted creed of the Church hierarchy in several countries, and has established tens of thousands of *comunidades eclesiales de base* among the peasantry and urban poor.

Politically, Liberation Theology has been used to justify a diverse range of political activities, from nonviolent protest to agrarian reform to armed revolution. In Brazil the progressive Church was instrumental in returning the nation to democracy; in Nicaragua the support of elements in the Catholic Church helped shepherd the Sandinistas into power. In the realm of doctrine, Liberation Theology has sought to expunge the atheistic bias from socialism and to develop an indigenous, syncretic Catholicism that directly addresses the Latin American context. And in the process it has posed a significant challenge to the authority of the Vatican.

LIBERATION Theology first came to know itself at the Latin American Bishops' Conference in Medellín, Colombia, in August 1968. Five years after Vatican II, and three months after the student riots in Paris, the bishops were intoxicated by the perfume of revolution; and the pronouncements that emerged from Medellín are among the most radical documents in the history of the Catholic Church. The conference described Latin American capitalism as an instance of "institutionalized violence" (a doctrine that would later be used to justify countervailing revolutionary violence) and as a "situation of sin." The bishops divided political thinkers into the trinity of "traditionalists," "developmentalists," and "revolutionaries." They evinced a marked preference for the third sort.

But Medellín's greatest contribution was the use of the word "liberation" itself, which swiftly displaced "salvation" as the central salvific event in the literature of the liberationists. (The term "Theology of Liberation" was coined by Gustavo Gutierrez, a Peruvian academic who helped draft the Medellín statements and who became a leading theoretician of the doctrine he named.) But with the shift from salvation to liberation, there was a change in emphasis from the individual to the social aspect of being. The focus of faith became the transformation of political reality, not the resistance of physical temptation. This transformation, moreover, had institutional corollaries: liberationists advocated the creation of "base communities," groups of a few dozen worshipers, led by either a priest or a lay person, in which the community of pre-Constantinian Christianity could be reconstituted.

For many Americans, these theological niceties and ecclesiological distinctions seem a little beside the point. For them, Liberation Theology is rather a question of wines and skins: there is the suspicion that the biblical language of the liberationists masks the very Marxist ideology that has placed much of the developing world in chains. Is Liberation Theology simply Leninism garnished with God?

NAMING A PAINTING

That could be *Goethe Working on a Lamp,*
Ruritanian Blues or *Sunset Dumps*—
Canvases seen from a mobile home
By Dorsine Alph, the drunken muleteer's
Shy mistress given to clairvoyant spells,
A primitive noted for her magic force,
Powerful, but just a little coarse.

Or it could be *Playing the Clarinet*
Outside the Outhouse by Miss Training Camp,
The utterly debauched ex-suffragette
Who does amazing things with a hairnet,
Something worthy of the Roman Games
With a little Greek aside—you get me, Mac?
She married Woody Saw, the lumberjack.

Woody is a reader. "Amazing Comics"
Got him through the winter. "Which is more
Than that dumb broad couldda done," he said,
Later, I mean after the incident
In which Miss Camp became the camp's . . . You've guessed!
That's right. Camp follower! "Enough's enough!"
Woody, drunk again. "To hell with love!"

"It's all the same"—a cynic drinking wine—
"Anthony and Cleopatra, Mutt and Jeff,
Ma and Jiggs—what's the difference? Sex
Either debauches or uplifts the soul.
It's the only thing around that counts. And Art.
And Money, of course. The quality of life
Is never strained. Except most of the time."

HOWARD MOSS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Or does it envision a different sort of political praxis? It is difficult to settle the question when the movement spans a dozen nations and has produced dozens of important theoreticians. Yet this is the ambition of Phillip Berryman and of Michael Novak—the one from the left, the other from the right. Taken together, their books are instructive not only about the development and the direction of Liberation Theology, but also about its uses for American intellectuals.

"LIBERATION Theology," Berryman tells us at the outset of his book, is neither "an exotic brew of Marxism and Christianity" nor "a movement of rebel priests bent on challenging church authority." Instead it is "theology—that is, it is a systematic, disciplined reflection on Christian faith and its implications." Berryman, an ex-Jesuit who has spent the past ten years in Central America on behalf of left-leaning organizations such as the American Friends Service Committee and Witness for Peace, is acutely aware of the political stakes of these theological debates. Yet his central conceit is that Liberation Theology must be taken to be primarily religious, not political. Most of his book is concerned with issues such as the scriptural significance of poverty, the uses of the book of Exodus, the administration of the sacraments, and the meaning of idolatry in capitalist society. There is very little about the specifics of political organization in Latin America.

Perhaps Berryman's effort to depoliticize Liberation Theology is owed to the influence of the thinkers he discusses, who tend to analyze events in biblical, rather than political, language. But it is also owed to the fact that this is a work of apologetics, designed to present Liberation Theology to an American audience that does not share Berryman's own assumptions. Berryman is well aware that Western liberals will fall for theological positions that they would reject flat out if stated in political terms. (The latest instance of this gullibility is Conor Cruise O'Brien, whose account of the Nicaraguan regime in a recent issue of the *Atlantic* is tinged with vicarious conversion: "You can actually feel around you in Nicaragua something going on that you know can't be switched off, either from Washington or from Rome: that most intractable thing, a new kind of faith.") And the result, in Berryman's book, is an argument that is a deception.

According to Berryman, Liberation Theology represents not a coherent political theory but a new way of reading Scripture, an original method of framing the questions that the Bible poses. This method, which is modeled on the technique of *concientización* developed by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, encourages the peasants and urban poor to apply biblical passages to their own social situation. It teaches them to receive the lessons of the Bible as Christ gives them, as parables whose application in the world is imprecisely defined. The Exodus, the prophets, the Crucifixion—all are re-embedded in the contemporary political context. The liberationists seek

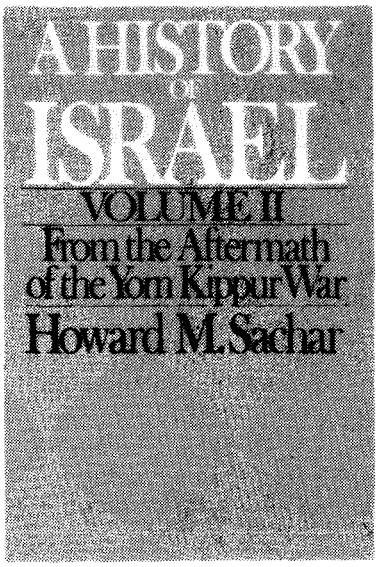
> to recover the human dimension of Jesus. His life is seen as one of struggle and uncertainty, one in which people, including Jesus himself, make real human decisions, with all their consequences. Thus, Jesus' execution by the authorities of both "church" and "state" of his time is a direct consequence of his message, which is correctly seen as "subversive" of the existing order.

The promise and the dangers of such a "hermeneutic" (Berryman's word) approach to Christ's life are evident. Such a reading certainly has the power to recover deeply disturbing aspects of the Bible, and to lend moral force to struggles against inequality. (The American civil rights movement was a case in point.) Yet it also risks vulgarizing religion and politics, and degenerating into coarse propaganda for a Che, a Sandino, or another indigenous martyr. (In Nicaragua they chant "¡Pueblo de Sandino! ¡Pueblo Cristo!")

Berryman would have us believe that the liberationist hermeneutic arises spontaneously from the poor, who hold the text up naturally as a mirror to their own lives. But it is evident that the convexities of such a mirror are subject to ideological manipulation, that the liberationist reading is as rife with political a prioris as any other. And though the goal of enabling peasants to think critically about their position in society is noble, there lingers throughout Berryman's account the unmistakable impression that his true interest lies in the creation of a power base for the revolutionary left. This impression is borne out by the experience of base communities in Central America. As Berryman notes:

> [Base communities] function in effect as cadre schools, primarily for leadership within the church. Leadership qualities developed there, however, may have spin-

A monumental saga continues...



$19.95 at better bookstores
or order directly from:
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
Dept. NW, 200 Madison Avenue,
New York, NY 10016

A brilliant successor to Howard Sachar's classic *History of Israel: From the Rise of Zionism to Our Time*, which *The New York Times* hailed for its "masterful control," this book begins where its predecessor left off—in the 1973 aftermath of Israel's costliest war.

Here in full richness of texture is the story of the ethnic "revolution" that brought Menachem Begin to power; the social upheaval convulsing the Arab population of the West Bank; the growth of Palestinian terrorism and of incipient Jewish vigilantism; the clandestine dialogue between Israel's and Lebanon's political leaders that culminated in Ariel Sharon's ill-starred 1982 military invasion. This book is both a compelling chronicle and a penetrating analysis of Israel's current difficulties and achievements—a history certain to win recognition alongside its predecessor as the definitive work in its field. "An outstanding resource book for those concered about and with Israel."—*Kirkus Reviews* "A much-needed sequel."—Walter Laqueur

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

offs elsewhere. In Central America the mass organizations of peasants developed out of soil prepared by church pastoral work . . . . One Nicaraguan organizer later said the Sandinistas regarded the base communities as "quarries" for their own organizing.

In Nicaragua the peasant-based Evangelical Committees for Agrarian Advancement (CEPA) began as a church organization, but it was not long before it became an organ of the Sandinistas. Today the Nicaraguan "Popular Church," or "Church of the Poor," serves as an unflinching apologist for the regime's excesses, providing evidence of religious "tolerance" to foreign visitors in exchange for financial support and media access. In El Salvador peasant organizations initiated by priests have been reliable recruiting grounds for the guerrillas.

IT IS when we begin to examine the political statements at the edge of Berryman's argument that his assumptions are revealed. For example: Berryman claims to support human rights and basic civil liberties, but still he cites with approval a critique of Carter's human rights policy by the far-left Ecumenical Research Department in Costa Rica entitled *Carter and the Logic of Imperialism*. One essay in this collection, by the Uruguayan Juan Luis Segundo, expresses what Berryman approvingly calls the "startling position" that political torture by the right in Uruguay is understandable, given the economic dependence of Latin America upon the North. According to Segundo, "The root of human rights violations was to be found in the impossible conditions laid on Third World countries by the rich countries, conditions which could only be maintained by repression." If this "Christian" can find justification in such sophistry for right-wing violence, how much more terror must be admissible from the left?

Berryman's political program is further exposed by his references to concrete revolutions. Cuba, he assures us, is not the political model that liberationists favor; but then he proceeds to defend Castro's regime in great detail. On the subject of Nicaragua, where liberationists have played a direct role in shaping the Sandinistas' ideology and bolstering their legitimacy, Berryman is even more ambiguous. First he reels through the criticisms of the FSLN directorate, including the imposition of censorship, the militarization of Nicaraguan society, and the human rights abuses against the Miskito Indians. And then he notes diffidently that "I do not propose to reply point-by-point to such a litany of accusations." This refusal even to engage the arguments of his opponents, along with a flip characterization of the Philippine revolution as an effort "to co-opt what might have become a real revolution," leaves little doubt about Berryman's own politics. He is revealed as a man who would sacrifice individual liberty to economic equality, and sacrifice both to the hegemony of the left.

LIKE THE larger Church, Liberation Theology has an unquenchable need for saints. It must render its principles in human form. The latest subject for such revolutionary hagiography is, believe it or not, Fidel Castro. Never mind that his regime has persecuted Catholics relentlessly for their counterrevolutionary "deviations" (believing in God, for example). Never mind that he still insists that all Party members be atheists. Since 1971, when, at a meeting of Christians for Socialism in Chile, Castro declared Marxists and the Christian left to be "strategic allies" against capitalism, he has seen the advantages of courting the liberationists abroad, perhaps because it distracts from his record at home. The aging Communist leader may also have in mind Machiavelli's observation that a princedom that is not supported by piety cannot survive the passing of its prince.

But now we have the pleasure, courtesy of the permanent mission of Cuba (which serves as agent for the book) and Simon and Schuster (which publishes it), of being able to read nearly 300 pages of Castro's musings on Christianity and himself. *Fidel and Religion* is not only a document of great clinical interest about the psychology of dictators; it also illustrates how easily spiritual and political categories may be conflated. In this series of interviews conducted by the Brazilian liberationist Frei Betto (whom Castro met in Nicaragua "in the home of Sergio Ramírez"), Castro delivers himself of such judgments as: "I believe Karl Marx could have subscribed to the Sermon on the Mount." He compares the traits of the committed Marxist to those of his Jesuit high school teachers, and draws a historical parallel between the persecution of the early Christians by Rome and his own struggle with the American Imperium.

Most of all, Castro seems taken with the Church's cult of martyrdom, in which every death feeds the certainty of conviction. "The great historic truth is that the Communist movement also has its martyrology in its struggles to change an unfair social system," Castro reveals. "Like the early Christians, the Communists too were savagely slandered and cruelly repressed." At one point Castro describes a macabre scene in which, following a rocket attack during the Bay of Pigs invasion, a soldier, even as the life flowed out of him, painted Castro's name on a door in blood. "That part of the door has been preserved; it must be in the museum," Castro reflects. "I tell you, it was a very impressive thing."

FROM THE seriousness with which Michael Novak treats their arguments, we must conclude that he has found the majority of the liberationists to be more sincere than Berryman is about their religious motives. Novak, too, gives the impression of a man whose Christian faith has been overwhelmed by politics. But unlike Berryman, he is quite forthright about what his politics are. Novak declares himself to be

> on the "neoconservative" side of the debate—neither libertarian nor democratic socialist, but a person of the left who has grown to be critical of the left because of its excessive reliance on politics and the state.

Although he professes to be in sympathy with their aims and in awe of their intellectual ambition, Novak considers the economic assumptions of the liberationists to be profoundly misguided. He opposes his own empiricism to the weak-minded theory of the Liberation Theologians, arraigning them for mixing theology and economics to the detriment of both. Whereas Liberation Theology describes the economic system of Latin America as being one of "dependent capitalism," Novak believes that the continent is mired in mercantilism, in a political culture and economic practice deeply skewed toward the state. Between Marxists and conservatives in Latin America there is an "anti-liberal concordance" that is hostile to commerce, free thought, and individual initiative. "Latin America does need a revolution . . . and the revolution it needs is both liberal and Catholic."

Novak's case for a free market model of economic development is convincing, though it is familiar. Latin America's economic stagnation is owed less to its "dependency" on the North, he argues, than to government regulation and social stratification that strangle economic initiative. To support his argument, Novak

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

points to the examples of South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and the other "tigers" of the Pacific rim. Those places came out of World War II far poorer in human and natural resources than Brazil or Argentina; yet they all have swiftly outstripped their Latin American competitors. (How closely the newly prosperous nations of the Pacific approximate American *political* ideals is an issue that Novak carefully avoids.)

AS LONG AS HE remains on economic ground, Novak's case against the liberationists is secure. When he attempts to justify capitalist liberalism in terms of his faith, however, his argument begins to falter. Like many neoconservatives, Novak glibly and reflexively refers to "Jewish and Christian values"; his faith seems a little frozen, a set of cheerful sentiments and useful habits, instead of a continuing process of meditation and interpretation. This facileness is evident in his rebuttal to the Mexican Marxist José Miranda, whose *Communism in the Bible* argues that capital is a form of idolatry. Novak writes: "It never occurs to Miranda that in its economic views the Bible is a pre-capitalist document. The secrets of economic development were not discovered until the end of the 18th century."

But surely the Savior's disdain for the accumulation of wealth cannot be written off as a simple matter of economic context. How, one wonders, does Novak interpret the injunction that

> No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (Matthew 6:24);

or Christ's command to a young man who would follow him:

> If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. (Matthew 19:21);

or, for that matter, the aphorisms of reversal that abound in the Gospel:

> Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. (Luke 6:24-5)

To attribute the profoundly antimaterialist sentiments of the New Testament to a specific mode of production is patently absurd, as if the Gospel were a five-year plan rather than a guide to salvation.

Further problems arise when Novak asserts a causal link between piety and liberal capitalism. "It is difficult to find a country in the world where religion . . . is taken with greater daily seriousness than in the United States," he writes. While such statements are difficult to verify empirically, it seems pretty clear that there is at least as much religion in the daily life of Italy or Mexico—nations whose material standards are much lower. Furthermore, the neoconservative's economic darlings of the Pacific rim have shown far less enthusiasm for Western religion than they have for the West's economic system.

NOVAK CAN SHOW that the market's decisions are efficient. He is less able to show that they are virtuous. But this is only Novak's most recent attempt at reconciling two worldviews that are essentially irreconcilable. In his *Toward a Theology of the Corporation*, published by the American Enterprise Institute in 1981, he lovingly listed the ways in which the American corporation "mirrors God's presence." He discovered seven "signs of grace" in the corporation—"a suitably sacramental number," as he puts it. Novak's efforts to furnish the free market with a halo, to co-opt capitalism for his Christian communitarianism, are so contrived that he must rewrite even Adam Smith. Smith's famous observation that individuals unintentionally promote the welfare of society by pursuing their private economic interest was, according to Novak, a "misstatement":

> Smith's error was to say by pursuing his own "interest," where he should have said "by pursuing his own most intelligent judgment." The larger idea can be put this way: "When an economic activist follows his most intelligent judgment in order to accomplish a fruitful economic outcome . . . ."

Substituting "economic activist" for "capitalist" may give a more wholesome ring to Smith's idea, but it does nothing to change the competitive and egotistic character of the free market. It is hardly a historical accident that the publication of *The Wealth of Nations* coincided with the beginning of a steep decline in the Church's own authority, and that the Church has traditionally viewed "liberalism" with grave suspicion.

The defensiveness of Novak's argument may reflect his awareness that such enthusiasm for "democratic capitalism" is out of line with both Catholic tradition and the pope's own thinking. While the Vatican has assiduously corrected the excesses of Liberation Theology, it has been equally critical of the materialism of the capitalist West. Moreover, the "unrestricted, restless, infinite . . . drive to ask questions" that Novak identifies as the foundation of the liberal ethic is hardly admired by John Paul II, whose papacy has sought to reassert the magisterium of doctrinal authority.

Novak's contradictions are best revealed in his investigation of the religious roots of socialist doctrine. Along with the early Christian communities, the Gnostics, the Taborites, the Hussites, and several rogue Latin American priests, the Christian lineage of Liberation Theology includes the Jesuit order of the 17th century, which established a form of benevolent totalitarianism among the Guarani Indians of Peru. These communities (recently romanticized in *The Mission*) divided the Indians into "redactions," in which all property was held communally and every decision of daily life was made by the Church. The Jesuits supervised the Indians' work; they chose their mates for them; they insisted on an absolute uni-

University of Cambridge
Summer Study Program
For *Adults*
July 5 - 25, 1987

LEARN at the University of Cambridge with distinguished Cambridge faculty.

LIVE in residence at beautiful Emmanuel College.

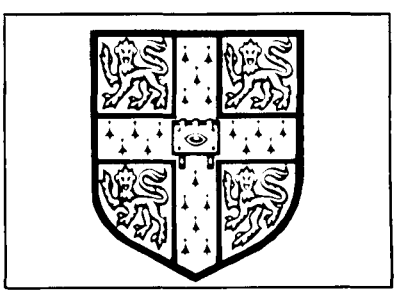
CURRICULUM tailored to the interests of adults who are looking for a unique educational and cultural experience.

COURSES:

†*The World of Shakespeare
*English Houses and Landscaped Gardens
†*Medieval Society
*British vs. American Politics
*Archeology of Britain

*Non-Credit and Undergraduate Credit
†Graduate Credit

For brochure write or call . . .
Office of Cooperating Colleges
714 Sassafras St. • Erie, Pennsylvania 16501
Phone (814) 456-0757



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

formity of clothing, food, and demeanor. Writes Novak:

> The Fathers did everything possible to stifle individual initiative. They expressly prevented their charges from developing a sense of interest that might make them independent minded. They did not blame the social system they had imposed for stifling the development of personality.

But the devastating fact remains that these very stiflers of individual initiative were widely regarded as the realization of Christian harmony on earth, not only by the Church authorities but even by Montesquieu and Voltaire, who labeled these arrangements "a triumph of humanity." And it is precisely this ecclesiastical enthusiasm for well-ordered tyranny that is echoed eerily in the recent spiritual enthusiasms for the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. Novak seems aware of these contradictions, but he fails to face them.

A COMMON interpretation of Liberation Theology holds that it is an agent of decline, that it is bringing about an "end of Christendom"—of the time-honored interdependence of the Church and the ruling order. That relationship persisted in Latin America long after it disappeared in the rest of the world, and it is now drawing to a close even there. But Liberation Theology is not really the reason for the change. It is, rather, a final and ultimately futile attempt to reconstitute Latin American Christendom in another form. Certainly Latin American Catholicism is desperately struggling—both against Pentecostalism and other Protestant sects, and against a capitalism that restlessly disrupts all received values—for a continuing relevance in the modern world. From this perspective, both the Vatican's renewed orthodoxy and the Latin Americans' flirtations with the violent left are symptoms of the same marginalization of Catholicism's intellectual authority. This desperation can be noted in the extravagance of Liberation Theology's borrowed Marxist rhetoric, in its ceaseless hostility to all that comes from *el Norte*, and in the unsavory allies it has accepted in its reconciliation with the state.

This era in the history of the Latin American Church may soon be passing, as Latin America moves in the direction of political pluralism. A significant sign of this change can be seen in the recent works of the Brazilian priest Leonardo Boff, a major figure in the intellectual development of Liberation Theology. Boff's recent writings display a healthy wariness for any brand of "popular politics" that appropriates the mantle of the masses to impose the rule of a new elite.

Boff gained worldwide recognition in 1984, when he was called before Cardinal Ratzinger at the Vatican to discuss "deviations" in his thought and was placed under a gag order of "penitential silence" for a year. Ratzinger's two "Instructions" on Liberation Theology were ostensibly directed at Boff, although politically he is among the more moderate Liberation Theologians. Unlike the majority of his fellow liberationists, however, Boff recognizes that "socialism in actual practice" has had a sorry record. He is alive to the "devouring mystical seduction" of Marxist theory.

Perhaps most important has been Boff's criticism of "certain intellectuals who are organically linked to dominant power, with their illuminist premise that they alone are the vessels of wisdom, light, and solutions." This cuts both ways, at the right and the left alike. In the evolution of Boff's thinking, we may be witnessing at last the outlines of an "option for the poor" that is free of the earlier apocalypticism of Liberation Theology, and of the willingness to impose virtue by force of arms. While stressing the need for a new pluralism within the Church, Boff seems to have accepted that the Church is only one actor within the pluralistic debate of the larger society. This "second phase" of Liberation Theology may well succeed in tempering the movement's original fire, and the irresponsibility that accompanied it, with a sense of its own limitations.

CROCKER COULSON

DESPERATELY SEEKING SOPHOCLES

Oedipus Trilogy: King Oedipus, Oedipus at Colonos, Antigone A version by Stephen Spender

(Random House, 199 pp., $19.95)

The dustcover of Stephen Spender's *Oedipus Trilogy* gives a subtitle: *The Oedipus Trilogy of Sophocles*. This is a claim that Spender himself carefully avoids, which is just as well, since it is, not to mince words, fraudulent. There never was any such thing as an Oedipus trilogy of Sophocles—although three of his plays deal with the fate of the Theban royal house. They would have been a trilogy if, like the three plays of the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus, they had been staged in the theater of Dionysus on the same day and presented to the audience in the chronological order of the mythical narrative on which they are based: *Oedipus the King*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, *Antigone*. But in fact *Antigone*, which brings the story to a close, was produced first, in 442 B.C.; *Oedipus the King* some ten years or so later; and *Oedipus at Colonus* more than 20 years later still.

Spender's trilogy ignores these dates (though he is of course aware of them). Instead it proceeds from *Oedipus the King* through *Oedipus at Colonus* to *Antigone*. To force plays from such disparate periods of a poet's life into the straitjacket of a "play in three acts," which puts the earliest work after the latest, seems perverse. What would we think of a French or German poet who produced a three-act play called "The Roman Trilogy" based on translations of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*—the central play dating from 1599, the other two from the years 1607 to 1609, after *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *King Lear*? Nobody, not even a publisher, would dare call it "Shakespeare's Roman Trilogy."

Spender explains that his play was originally written for performance, and was in fact staged in Oxford and in Cambridge in 1983. The present version, drastically revised, proposes "to present, in very clear language, written to be spoken, or to be read as if the reader were hearing it spoken, the story of the house of Labdacus in bare outline, portraying the characters and choruses." The phrase "in bare outline" is presumably an oblique reference to the massive cuts that were imposed by the decision to make one play out of three.

Such surgery is not uncommon when

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ancient tragedy is adapted for the modern stage. In fact Spender had an illustrious predecessor in William Butler Yeats. When Yeats included Wilde's *Ballad of Reading Gaol* in his *Oxford Book of Modern Verse* (1936), he shortened it drastically, defending this procedure with the Olympian phrase, "My work gave me that privilege"; and he availed himself of the same privilege when it came to Sophocles. In his production of *Oedipus the King* for the Abbey Theatre (the text was published in 1928), he cut the dialogue (which he turned into prose) to the bone, and sometimes deeper. The choral odes, magically transformed by Yeatsian cadences and symbols ("The holy images, the Delphian Sybil's trace"; "For death is all the fashion now, till even Death be dead"), are also severely pruned.

But Yeats cut with a scalpel. Spender uses an ax. The messenger speech in *Oedipus the King*, for example, has 59 lines in Sophocles and 20 in Spender. In one scene of *Oedipus at Colonus*, 18 lines are omitted from a speech of Theseus, nine from a speech of Oedipus, and 14 from Theseus's reply. The choral odes fare no better; whole stanzas disappear here and there, and in *Antigone* one entire choral poem, the Danae ode, is suppressed.

ARGUMENTS CAN of course be advanced in favor of such high-handed procedures: the distaste of modern audiences for long speeches, the allusiveness of choral poetry, and so on. Unfortunately, in one case after another, a malicious daimon seems to take control of the operation, guiding the cutter's hand unerringly to speeches that are some of the greatest poetic passages in ancient drama, and to others that are vital to the meaning of the play. Yeats, for example, omitted a crucial speech from his version of *Oedipus the King*. It is the speech in which Jocasta tries to comfort Oedipus. He has been relieved of the fear that he may someday kill his father, but he still fears the other half of Apollo's prophecy—that he will marry his mother. Jocasta wishes to relieve him by dismissing not only divine prophecy, but any conception that there is a meaning to human existence. "What should man fear?" she asks. "His life is subject to the operations of chance, and nothing can be truly foreseen. Best to live at random, as best one can." This is a vision of an irrational universe that would return to haunt the Western mind in many different forms, but it appears here for the first time in our literature. And of course it is exposed as mistaken by the spectacular denouement that follows almost immediately.

Why did Yeats cut it out? Perhaps he was offended, or thought that his audience would be offended, by the rest of the speech, in which Jocasta calls a spade a spade: "Have no fear about this marriage with your mother. In dreams, too, many a man has bedded with his mother." Or perhaps the cut was made in rehearsal, and the published text printed from the "fowle papers." But neither explanation will account for Spender's even more startling omissions. Though many of them do no more than impoverish the text, some do real damage by removing material essential to an understanding of the dramatic action. One example out of many will serve to illustrate both lamentable results.

In *Oedipus at Colonus*, the blind old wanderer tells his protector Theseus, king of Athens, that giving his body burial in Athenian soil may involve Athens in war with Thebes. To Theseus, who doubts that Athens and Thebes, friendly powers now, will ever be at war, Oedipus reads the lesson of the instability of all things human:

> Dearest son of Aegeus, only to the gods comes no old age or death. All else is dissolved by all-powerful Time. The earth's strength decays, the body's too; faith dies, mistrust flowers, and the wind of friendship does not blow steady between man and man, city and city. For some now, for others later, sweet turns to sour and then back again to love.

In Spender's version, this is reduced to: "All between them and you is sunshine now. But Time will make it shadow in an instant."

Not content with this miracle of compression, Spender goes on to omit the lines that follow, which contain Oedipus's prophecy that Thebes will one day be defeated by Athens in a battle fought over the site of his grave: "There my hidden sleeping corpse, cold though it be, will drink their warm blood." The result of this cut is that the reader unfamiliar with the original never clearly realizes the nature of the gift that Oedipus claims to bestow on Athens, nor the reason why the location of his grave is to remain a secret known only to its kings.

Less damaging to the cohesion of the action, but no less disturbing because of its apparent willfulness, is the excision of Antigone's famous lines about the eternal laws she claims to obey in preference to Creon's edict. In Sophocles:

> It was not Zeus that made that proclamation, nor did the Justice that lives with the lower gods define such laws for men. Nor did I think that your decree was of such force that a mere mortal could override the unwritten, unfailing statutes of the gods.

CLASSIC T-SHIRTS!
Beethoven, Hemingway, Da Vinci, Jung, J.F.K., Mozart, Shakespeare, Cheshire Cat, Twain, Darwin, Van Gogh, Gandhi, Nietzsche, Freud, Austen, Poe, Bach, many others.
T-Shirt: (white) $11.50, 4/$40.
Sweatshirt: (grey) $20, 2/$38.
Sizes: S, M, L, XL. **Ship:** $1 per item.
Illustrated brochure: 75¢
Historical Products, Box 220 C S Cambridge, MA 02238

THE BILL OF RIGHTS T-SHIRT
First Ten Amendments to the Constitution screened on a Quality T-Shirt
WRITE FOR FREE CATALOGUE
CORONA GRAPHICS
DEPT. 102
395 RIVER ROAD
BOX 1084
E. LIVERPOOL, OHIO 43920

SPECIAL
2 For $13.95 PPD!
$8.95 Each PPD.
Red/White/Lt. Blue/Yellow
S/M/L/XL

HOW TO EXECUTE AN AGENCY
by E. Waterhouse Allen
Wicked, informed satire about Bureaucratic Types you should recognize! Distilled from 50 years work in human service agencies. 1st edit., $3.95.
BARK-BACK
P.O. Box 235, Glenshaw, PA 15116.

AUTHORS WANTED BY NEW YORK PUBLISHER
Leading subsidy book publisher seeks manuscripts of all types: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, scholarly and juvenile works, etc. New authors welcomed. Send for free, illustrated 40-page brochure NR-1. Vantage Press. 516 W. 34 St., New York, N.Y. 10001

Call for any current book
● Amex, MasterCard, Visa or check.
● We ship immediately, anywhere in the world. ● Gift wrapping available.
● Mail orders welcome.
BOOK CALL®
1-800-255-2665
In CT or Worldwide (203) 966-5470
59 Elm Street, New Canaan, CT 06840

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For they are alive and in force, not just today and yesterday, but forever, and no one knows when or from what source they first appeared.

In Spender: "I do not consider that your law overrules the laws of the gods."

IN SOME PLACES, however, Spender adds something of his own. He admits to one "spurious interpolation," the answer to the riddle of the Sphinx, which he inserts into the speech in which Oedipus boasts of having solved the riddle. For a stage version, even for a version to be read, this might well be defended; though the ancient audience knew the words of the riddle, the modern does not. But the text is full of other interpolations, just as spurious, but unacknowledged. Many of them owe their origin to the initial flawed decision to rearrange the order of the plays. We have no means of knowing whether Sophocles in 442 B.C. planned someday to write *Oedipus at Colonus*, but it seems unlikely, since in his *Antigone* Ismene says to her sister, "Think how our father died, hated and disgraced." (It is a line that Spender, of course, omits.) But Sophocles certainly did not give Antigone a speech paving the way for the later play to be fitted in ahead of the earlier one: "Don't you remember what Polyneices said—'Do not dishonor my corpse but give me burial with due funeral rites?' " For that speech Spender is wholly responsible.

Nor did Sophocles, foreseeing in 442 B.C. that he would write *Oedipus the King* a decade or so later, give Creon in *Antigone* a final exit speech that links the two plays by the evocation of an image dominant in the later one. "Come blessed day," says Spender's Creon, "for me the day / That is my last, where I'll see no tomorrow. O / Oedipus / Blind, blind, blind." Pure Spender, as are the references to Creon's blindness in the speeches immediately preceding: "Blinded by self-will . . . Blind in council, blind in all my deeds." Spurious, too, is the chorus's reproach to Creon ("You caused not only your son's death / But too that other's—hers"), as well as Creon's reply ("Yes, murderer of them both—/ Haemon and Antigone, their love").

In Sophocles' play, neither Creon nor the chorus mentions Antigone in the last scene; Creon grieves for the deaths of his son and his wife, Eurydice, who, after listening to the messenger's account of Haemon's suicide, goes offstage to take her own life. Spender suppresses not only her appearance, however, but all mention of her. This cut is made on the grounds that "to a modern audience it would seem absurd surely to have a character appear at the end of the play, only to commit suicide." But Sophocles knew what he was doing. Creon has defended the claims of the state against the claims of the family, in particular the right of the family to bury its dead. Thus it is through his family that he is punished, by the suicides of his wife and son, both of whom die cursing him.

It would be a pleasure to be able to say that the faults and the failures of Spender's "trilogy" are to some extent redeemed by the quality of the verse—where verse is used, that is, for most of the dialogue is prose. But no such claim can be made. The last stanza of the great ode in praise of Athens in *Oedipus at Colonus*, for example, begins with a line that cries out for parody: "But most of all, I have to praise the horse." And though some felicities are to be found—Spender's version of the ode on old age in the same play, for example—lapses such as the line about the horse are all too common.

Lapses in diction are even more frequent. On the one hand, Spender introduces strident vulgarisms that violate the canons of Sophoclean tragic dignity. "Bring that detested whore here," says Spender's Creon; he is speaking, believe it or not, of Antigone. In the same play, he protests that he will never rescind his decree forbidding the burial of Polyneices' corpse: "not though Zeus's eagles should fly up / Shitting their master's throne." On the other hand, such embarrassing expedients for giving the dialogue a modern timbre appear cheek by jowl with fustian archaisms, undigested gobbets from Richard Jebb's Victorian translation. "Pinion him," says Oedipus to the guards, when the shepherd shows reluctance to answer questions. And Creon, in the same speech that features the shitting eagles, can speak in the pure translationese of "If the sage sells his wisdom for pelf."

One is left wondering why Spender did it. His "trilogy" is neither a translation of the Sophoclean plays nor a modern recreation of the ancient texts—like Anouilh's *Antigone*, Cocteau's *Machine Infernale*, or the recent *Gospel at Colonos*. It is neither fish nor flesh, nor good red herring.

BERNARD KNOX

Bernard Knox is director emeritus of the Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington, D.C.

PUNKO PANZA

Don Quixote by Kathy Acker

(Grove, 208 pp., $7.95)

It was only a matter of time before the postmodernists got around to rewriting *Don Quixote*. In their attack on modernism's lingering romanticism and cultural elitism, Cervantes's novel has taken on a privileged status. Perhaps as a very early novel, the work seems uncorrupted by that cultural accumulation glorified as "the literary tradition." Or as a Spanish work, it seems an alternative to the mainstream of English, French, and German literature. Or in the very quixotism of its ironic quest, it seems the perfect vehicle for anti-essentialist criticisms of absolutes such as "self" and "presence" that modernism left unchallenged. For whatever reason, *Don Quixote* has become the inevitable starting point of postmodernist literature. Nabokov made it the center of a lecture series. Borges imagined as his prototypical metafictionist an author who in the 20th century rewrites Cervantes's novel verbatim. And Robert Coover actually began such a project with the Cervantesque "prologue" placed midway through his collection of "fictions" *Pricksongs and Descants*.

Nor is it surprising that Kathy Acker should be the author to assume the role of neo-Cervantes. Combining the high rebelliousness of postmodernism with the low rebelliousness of punk, Acker's preferred method in her novels is, to use her own term, "plagiaristic." She moves at random through a wide range of borrowed voices, from the Latin poets to Patti Smith and the modern French fem-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

inists. Her novels are often (at least on their title pages) pseudonymous, claiming to be written by their protagonists—"The Black Tarantula," "Henri Toulouse Lautrec," "Pier Paolo Pasolini." Even Acker's two previous books, though published under her own name, bury authorial identity under a host of borrowings. *Blood and Guts in High School* draws extensively on Hawthorne and Genet (as well as on a Persian grammar book), while the ironically titled *Great Expectations*, after an initial nod to Dickens, proceeds in a most un-Dickensian way in imitation of Mme de Lafayette, Keats, Melville, Propertius, and various French pornographers.

Acker's *Don Quixote* grows out of her previous "plagiarisms," particularly *Great Expectations*, grafting its author's feminism onto a more traditional denial of the mimetic character of literature. While maintaining a basic allegiance to the Spanish original, Acker superimposes on Cervantes voices borrowed from Biely, Moravia, Shaw, Wedekind, and Céline, peppering these with passing echoes from Shakespeare, Brontë, Dante, Duran Duran, and numerous historians, pornographers, and Marxist theorists. Here is a sample of the style, from a section titled "The Selling of Lulu" (but imitating *Pygmalion*), in which Schön/Higgins tries to persuade Lulu/Eliza to be his guinea pig:

> Schön: By George, the streets will be strewn with the bodies of men shooting themselves for your sake before I've done with you. . . . Think of this: You shall marry a socialist politician who controls the arts. His father, who's a conservative member of Parliament, disinherits him for marrying you. But when he finally realizes your exquisite beauty, your fine manners, your dinner parties, his Lordship . . .
> Lulu: Shit.
> Schön: What?
> Lulu: Shit. I gotta shit.
> Schön: Oh. If you are naughty, and idle, you will sleep in the kitchen among the black widow spiders and be hit by my chauffeur with his huge car rod.

ACKER'S QUIXOTE is a woman who in the midst of an abortion "conceives" her mission: a quest for love in its full unrealizable insanity. After her Sancho Panza, an androgynous character called St Simeon, leaves early in the novel, Quixote's general quest is transformed into the specific attempt to find this lost friend—who has perhaps been transformed into one of the many tale-telling dogs she meets during her travels. Dying due to a loss of faith in humanity less than a fifth of the way through the

One of the great buys of 1987—Haverhills. . .

Fabulous "Mix & Match" Lamp Offer

*Please read this ad carefully for the "special deals"!**

A handsome tradition revived. . .

Banker's Lamp

When your grandfather (or great-grandfather) dropped by to visit his friendly banker, chances are that the original of this *Banker's Lamp* stood on his desk.

We have now re-created this enduring classic. Its heavy green glass shade is hand-blown and is coated white on the inside for best reflection. It casts a bright, glare-free light on your work and suffuses the room with a warm, intimate glow. The *Banker's Lamp* stands 12" high and has an 8" diameter base. All metal parts are brass (not brass-plated) and meticulously machined. The shade swivels to direct the light to best advantage. This handsome lamp adds a touch of Americana to any desk—at home or office.

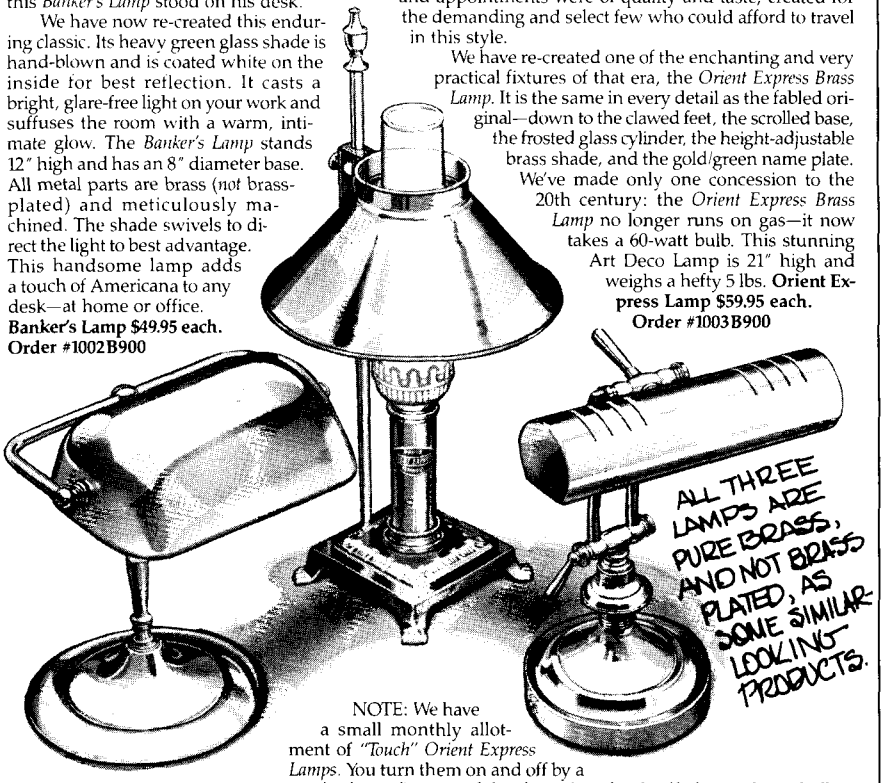
Banker's Lamp $49.95 each.
Order #1002B900

Evoke the great era of rail travel, with. . .

Orient Express Lamp

The Orient Express used to be called the "queen of trains", when it wended its way from Paris to Istanbul at the turn of the century. The finest dishes, the greatest vintages were served on these trains. Service was impeccable. All fixtures and appointments were of quality and taste, created for the demanding and select few who could afford to travel in this style.

We have re-created one of the enchanting and very practical fixtures of that era, the *Orient Express Brass Lamp*. It is the same in every detail as the fabled original—down to the clawed feet, the scrolled base, the frosted glass cylinder, the height-adjustable brass shade, and the gold/green name plate. We've made only one concession to the 20th century: the *Orient Express Brass Lamp* no longer runs on gas—it now takes a 60-watt bulb. This stunning Art Deco Lamp is 21" high and weighs a hefty 5 lbs. **Orient Express Lamp $59.95 each.**
Order #1003B900



NOTE: We have a small monthly allotment of *"Touch" Orient Express Lamps*. You turn them on and off by a touch of your finger, and they have three levels of light—with any bulb. They look the same as the "standard" model, and you get the same "3-for-2" deal.
"Touch" Orient Express Lamp $69.95 each.
Order #1245B900

Here is the "special deal"—"3-for-2 offer": You can order any one of these beautiful lamps at the prices shown, or you can order *any three for the price of two.
Three Banker's Lamps, just $99.90
Three Piano Lamps, just $99.90
Three Orient Express "Standard" Lamps, just $119.90
Three Orient Express "Touch" Lamps, just $139.90
OR
The "Combination", one of each, with "Standard" Orient Express Lamp $109.90 (Order #2500B900)
The "Combination", one of each, with "Touch" Orient Express Lamp $119.90 (Order #2501B900)

An enduring classic. . .

Brass Piano Lamp

Early in this century, just about every home was graced by one of these beautiful brass lamps. They were put into service as music and study lamps, for sewing, reading, and needlework. Even in their heyday they were quite expensive. Pure brass never came cheap.

We have re-created this classic in a stunning reproduction, of solid brass. The *Brass Piano Lamp* is 13" high and has a 6" diameter base that is heavily weighted with a cast iron collar. It will never topple over. Like its predecessor, the shade is supported by two S-shaped upright flutes, and it's articulated both at the top of the base and at the shade. All joints are carefully threaded and machined.
Brass Piano Lamp $49.95 each. Order #1240B900

FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 621-1203
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Please give order number(s) shown after each item and the quantities desired. If you prefer, mail check or chargecard authorization for the total amount. UPS/insurance: $5.95 for one lamp, $11.90 for three lamps, $5.95 for each additional lamp. Add sales tax for CA delivery. Please give your daytime phone number and issuing bank for charge orders. We cannot ship without this information. You have 30-day return privilege and one year warranty, of course.

For quantity orders (100+), call Mr. Ernest Gerard our Wholesale/Premium Manager, at (415) 543-6570 or write him at the address below.

since 1967
haverhills
131 Townsend Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

novel, Quixote is, in the long second section called "Other Texts," robbed of her own speech, and thus reduced to a condition in which "all she could do was read male texts which weren't hers." In the third and final section, Quixote regains her voice and travels to Nixonian America to continue the search for St Simeon. After more lectures on politics and sexuality, for which Quixote serves largely as silent audience, the novel ends in a double vision of despair. Killed once more by a loss of faith, Quixote dreams that God "Him- or Herself" denies the possibility of meaning: "There are no more stories, no more tracks, no more memories: there is you, knight. Since I am no more, forget Me. Forget morality. Forget about saving the world. Make Me up." Reborn a final time, Quixote discovers before her, like Eve at the end of *Paradise Lost*, a world of presence and possibility. But this hope may itself be delusory, and Quixote only awakening to another dream.

This non-narrative is presented as a collage. The sections, themselves divided into many shorter subsections, are interrupted by graphics, plays, letters, poems (in English and Latin), historical analyses, literary paraphrases, and Marxist critiques. Chronology is abandoned: Thomas Hobbes aborts the lovemaking of Mr. and Mrs. Nixon by arguing with Puerto Rican tenants, and Quixote's quest for St Simeon stands still while an unidentified voice supports Prince for President. Nor is there a unified theme. The book attacks everything from sexual stereotyping to high rents in the Village. And, as everywhere in Acker's work, this vision of chaos is glimpsed through a patina of violence and degrading sex.

STILL, THE NOVEL IS not just an exercise in neo-Dadaist high jinks. Although the book's content is self-consciously trivial, its politics of mockery is serious indeed. Experimental fiction of the 1960s reduced all cultural signs, highbrow and low, to the same level—what Donald Barthelme called "the trash phenomenon." Post-modernists of the '80s feel this reduction to be politically irresponsible, and Acker intends, in her references to pop culture and historical events, not to trivialize tradition but to overturn it. The idea is to correct the ahistorical aestheticism of the postmodernist fascination with cultural images by giving those images some political content: she wants to show how they have functioned to restrict human possibility—how they have sent messages that are ethnocentric, anti-feminist, or whatever. But at the same time she wants to avoid the received version of cultural history; to regard history as a linear progression—from Washington to Reagan, from Beowulf to Virginia Woolf—is simply to reinforce society's own self-serving account of its past. Thus, in Acker's work, randomness—discontinuity and anachronism—is meant to guard against the danger of celebrating tradition in a vacuum. The problem, of course, is that one mélange of cultural signifiers looks pretty much like another. It is not that easy to tell politically informed anachronism, as in *Don Quixote*, from politically mindless eclecticism, as in Philip Johnson's disembodied Chippendale scrolls floating above the skyline.

Since the conventionality of language is understood to make all writing a political act, controlled not by a single narrative voice or author (vestiges of that discredited fiction, the "self") but by the "power structure," plagiarism is the most innocent form of writing. As Acker puts the matter in *Blood and Guts*: "All culture stinks and there's no reason to make new culture-stink." So in this novel, with the breakdown of social coherence, her knight (now "night") ends in "mourning": "I wanted to find a meaning or myth or language that was mine," she says, "rather than those which try to control me; but language is communal and here is no community."

THE REAL PROBLEM for Acker is less history or literature than the false notion of individualism that she sees as underwriting them. Denying the romantic model of the poet as individual, original genius, Acker offers a model of art that is . . . Arabian:

> Unlike American and Western culture (generally), the Arabs (in their culture) have no (concept of) originality. That is, culture. They write new stories paint new pictures et cetera only by embellishing old stories pictures . . . They write by cutting chunks out of all-ready written texts and in other ways defacing traditions: changing important names into silly ones, making dirty jokes out of matters that should be of the utmost importance to us such as nuclear warfare.

And as a replacement for this exploded fiction of "original genius," Acker poses Woman—the eternal Other who has been historically denied her independent voice by a power structure that is exclusively male.

It is easy enough to understand the intellectual and political point that Acker would make, and to recognize its source in the philosophical skepticism associated with French poststructuralism, especially deconstruction. Poststructuralism began the business of dismantling the concepts of "history," "nature," "self"; deconstruction continued the job by showing language—even the language of people who want to criticize social arrangements—to be itself simply the product and reinforcer of existing power relations. But it is hard not to feel with this, her eighth novel, that Acker's method and message are both wearing thin. Lacking the exhilarating experimentation of *Blood and Guts* and the manic lyricism of *Great Expectations*, *Don Quixote* seems somehow familiar, and predictable. Given the political heat the novel generates, it is more than slightly ironic that Acker shows so little interest in the culture whose masterpiece she too quickly makes the vehicle of a patently Franglo-American intellectual debate. Nor does the conflation of feminism and deconstruction seem politically effective. At best the identification of Woman as Other recreates the very Romantic model of the exiled prophet that attacks on the self are meant to undermine: we have merely exchanged Jeremiah for Cassandra. At worst the mythologizing of Woman as Outcast implies that sexual discrimination is not a political act, specific to certain times and cultures, but a necessary and inevitable aspect of Womanhood. Thus good literature would make for bad politics.

FINALLY ONE WONDERS if the whole attack on the self makes philosophical sense. Even if the idea of individualism, and the excesses to which that idea has contributed in Western culture since Romanticism, really is so dangerous as to be best discarded, the postmodern form of this rejection is fraught with its own contradiction. For in the end, the attack on the self subtly affirms what it would deny. Fragmenting or plagiarizing the narrative voice does not "deconstruct" the self. It only refocuses attention where Acker least wishes it—back on the author. Certainly, as all the blurbs tell us, Acker's own voice is "unique." It may be a pseudonym, but it is never anonymous.

Maybe the trouble is much simpler indeed. Whatever they think of the matter as a philosophical problem, all—from Hume and Emerson to Noël Cow-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ard and Miss Manners—agree that self-examination makes for dull conversation. It is hard not to hear attacks on the self as inverted egotism, as a last cry of the Byronic soul for attention. Between the analysand trying to define his personal space and the postmodernist trying to deconstruct it, there does not seem to be much to choose. Even if Foucault was right to predict that individualism is a concept written in sand, to be washed away by the next historical wave, that is no reason for postmodernism's endless updates on the state of the psychic continental shelf.

DAVID VAN LEER

David Van Leer teaches at the University of California, Davis, and is the author of *Emerson's Epistemology* (Cambridge University Press).

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 6*

letes a few lines of the song's lyrics. After the line, "Learning how to carry on the family line of work," The Rainmakers sing, "It's the man in the White House, the man under the steeple,/ Passing out drugs to the American people./ I don't believe in anything, nothing is free/ They're feeding our people that Government Cheese." If, as Pasley claims, these are the sentiments of young voters who supported Reagan in the last election, I'd say they've since changed their tune. The song is not an anthem of neoconservatives, but a condemnation of feeble governmental gestures to pacify the underprivileged.

ANDREW J. PEARCE
Ames, Iowa

WHOSE DAY IN COURT?

To the editors:

The Supreme Court's latest "affirmative action" decision has opened a Pandora's box that will come back to haunt it later (TRB, "Ladies' Day," April 20). It was easy for the Court to rationalize relegating me, a white male, to the bottom of society's pecking order. But, the first time an "arguably more qualified" black man is "discriminated against" in favor of a white woman, they will then have to decide who is at the top. Good luck.

FRANK E. ROCKWELL
Rockville, Maryland

TRB, *from page 4*

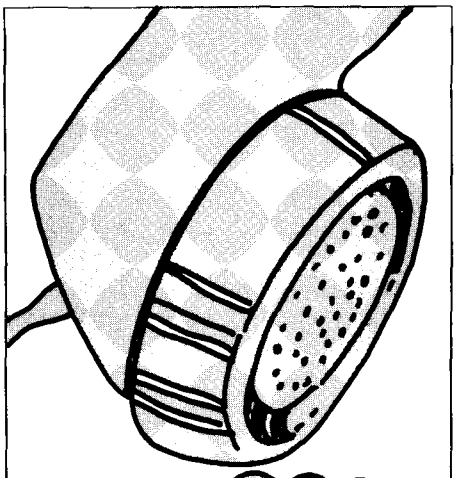
Ralph Nader and other reformers have long urged that corporate law and regulation be nationalized. But corporations have resisted. They like being able to play the states off against one another. Delaware earns a tidy sum in incorporation fees by having the most accommodating rules. You can incorporate in Delaware without setting foot there from one decade to the next.

Competition among the states for corporate plants and headquarters makes it impossible for any state to exercise its sovereign right to set tax rates, control pollution, and so on. Leaving these important policy questions to the states does not free people in different parts of the country to answer these questions in their own ways. It forces all states down toward the lowest common denominator.

Federalism is like "judicial restraint": when the conservative principle interferes with a desired outcome, the principle usually gives way. President Reagan worries about federalism when the subject is busing for desegregation. When the subject is his war on drugs, he doesn't mind trampling in the vineyards where the rights of states are stored. Corporate America looks with outrage on a Texas judge's bizarre interpretation of New York contract law, but doesn't leap to the sensible conclusion that national organizations should be regulated under national rules enforced by a national justice system.

It's been more than three years since Texaco's alleged misconduct. So far, the case has been dealt with by a Texas trial court, a Texas appeals court, a New York federal district court, a New York federal appeals court, the Supreme Court in Washington, and a federal bankruptcy judge awoken one Sunday morning at his home in suburban Larchmont, New York. Still to come are a ruling by the Texas Supreme Court and at least one more run—probably several—through the three levels of the federal court system.

Meanwhile, adding to the air of unreality, the shares of Pennzoil and Texaco continue to be traded on the public stock exchange. In effect, Texaco shareholders already have suffered their loss in the form of a stock plunge, and Pennzoil's already have enjoyed their gain. All that's left now is speculation on the outcome of the litigation crap shoot. Justice has nothing to do with it.



THE NEW REPUBLIC SUBSCRIBER SERVICE IS ONLY A PHONE CALL AWAY.

Do you have any questions about payments? Change of address? Delivery or other subscription problems?

Just pick up your phone and dial our toll-free hotline at

800-525-0643

(In Co: 303-447-9330)

Our operators are specially trained to provide you with quick, efficient subscription service.

For most efficient service, please have a copy of your latest magazine handy. If you have a question concerning payment, please have a copy of your cancelled check in front of you so we can quickly resolve your problem over the phone.

Of course, we can still handle your business by mail if you prefer. Simply send us a copy of your address label from the front of your last magazine and your change of address or other correspondence to:

THE NEW REPUBLIC
P.O. Box 56515
Boulder, CO 80322-6515

Request for new subscriptions, renewals of current subscriptions and gift subscriptions should also be sent to the address above.

By phone or by mail, TNR Subscriber Service has never been easier

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Relax

I'M A SUCKER for all the soft newspaper sections—Style, Lifestyle, Living, Life, Home, etc.—but the pseudo-hard Science supplement in the Tuesday *New York Times* should go back to the drawing boards. I like the diagrams of big bang theories, space stations, cyclotrons, DNA molecules, atoms, and quarks. The problem is what you might call the Social Science Times—those endless articles that report the latest research on the tendency of future-oriented people to fixate on the future, and of depression to be accompanied by a loss of optimism. And then there are the longitudinal studies of, to take a recent example, bullies. "The bully is set apart by his quickness to start fights, to use force to get his way and his general belligerence," a Science Times reporter explained a couple of weeks ago. One of his sources, John Lochman, a psychologist at Duke University Medical School, elaborated on the basis of a 22-year study: "We find that bullies have a strong need to control others." He also observed that "they see the other kid as having started the trouble." Among the study's other findings was that "teachers tend to loathe such troublemakers." The conclusion? After 22 years, this breakthrough: "Experts now favor attempts to change the ways of bullies as soon as the problem can be identified, or to head it off altogether, if possible."

BULLIES CLEARLY JUST need a taste of Funtastics, a month-long "stress management" course for children that was recently inaugurated in Concord, Massachusetts. One of the lessons involves dimming the lights, putting on a record of harps and chirping birds, and then instructing the kids to pretend they're in the woods, without worries. (The Thoreauvian spirit is alive and well in Concord.) "Breathe in energy, breathe out stress, and let the tension drain away," the child psychologist chants. Dark woods weren't exactly my childhood idea of a stress-free environment, but according to a report in the *New York Times* (not the Science Times, but just wait), the kids find the course very useful. One 12-year-old stress management graduate believes those breathing techniques will come in handy during adolescence, when "puberty and stuff will cause stress because I don't know what will happen to me." I'm not sure the hormones will be quite as manageable as he thinks. But a 9-year-old is sensibly preoccupied with more immediate problems: "I feel stress at breakfast when I expect bacon and eggs but get cold cereal." I remember the feeling.

STRESS MANAGEMENT is important for grown-ups, too, but the current urine testing craze has put obstacles in the way of the usual relaxing pastimes. What we need is a magic pill that could be slipped into the plastic cup and destroy all traces of past or present inebriation. The advantage of such a pill is that you could be high as a kite and still test sober as a judge. But, wouldn't you know, they've developed Ro 15-4513 instead. This new drug does exactly the opposite of the dream pill. Take it and you promptly feel sober as a judge—but still fail the breathalizer test when you exhale. Ro 15-4513 blocks the intoxicating and inhibition-erasing effects of alcohol—the fun parts. People are going to buy this drug? Scientists emphasize that it does not lower alcohol levels in the blood or alleviate such side-effects as respiratory depression or coma. Sadly, it looks like the Funtastics way to unwind may be the only way: Breathe in energy, breathe out stress . . .

GARY HART has apparently discovered some miracle relaxant, or else the woods of Colorado have worked wonders for him. Now that he's announced his presidential candidacy, the big news is how relaxed he is, how warm and open, how comfortable with himself. His friends, his staff, his supporters, his wife, his daughter can't stop talking about the miraculous new calm. It's enough to make you wonder about his character. How on earth can somebody be relaxed when contemplating a run for the presidency? Especially when he's running for the second time? Especially when the first time around was a nightmare? Hart's staff is desperate to capitalize on "anything that humanizes him" in order to overcome the "No Person" (as opposed to the "No Beef") problem of last time. But in a sense they face an impossible challenge. To succeed in remaking their candidate's personality will be to fail in establishing that he is a real person. What kind of human being undergoes a radical character metamorphosis in his 50s? Gary Hart's comparatively harmless name change was hard enough to explain during his first campaign. This sudden transformation of temperament can only revive suspicions that he's a calculating fake.

IT SEEMS that some starchy apparatchiks in the Soviet Union think the relaxation and recreation of the Gorbachev *glasnost* era have gone too far. But their latest ploy to curb decadence looks hopeless. An underground video starring Raisa Gorbachev as the first of the big-time, haute bourgeois spenders has been circulating in Moscow recently. Some speculate that the tape—featuring Raisa visiting Parisian boutiques, her American Express card in hand—is a KGB plot designed to undercut her husband. But just who is supposed to be scandalized by these revelations? The secret police, while censoriously peering through their hidden cameras, may have missed what's happening all around them. At a Moscow conference hall recently, Western wickedness was on public display and it was met with great acclaim, according to a special issue of *People* about the U.S.S.R. At a gala event to mark the debut of the Russian edition of the West German fashion magazine *Burda Moden*, Pierre Cardin exhibited his special new line of clothes for the Soviet Union. The premiere issue of the magazine featured ads for, among other indulgences, American Express cards. The hall was packed, and Raisa Gorbachev herself put in an appearance. It sounds as though the video is more likely to spur comrades' desires for luxuries (to see the tape, you've got to own a VCR in the first place) than to rouse their ascetic communist spirits. Maybe it's not a KGB trick at all, but the birth of another *glasnost* innovation: the first Bolshevik commercial.

A. H.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HOW TO START AN INDUSTRIAL RENAISSANCE

VISION, CAPITAL, COOPERATION, AND COURAGE

Remember 1980? America's auto industry had just come through the brutal years of the oil crisis. GM had lost money for the first time since the early Twenties, and was spending billions to meet fast changing government regulations for safety, fuel economy, and emission control, and at the same time downsize its entire line.

Then, suddenly, American business found itself in a new era of worldwide competition and technological explosion. The Eighties had dawned in Detroit.

The entire auto industry and its suppliers were in crisis. Sell-offs and bailouts began. Some companies failed, and others moved operations overseas. Great factory towns became ghost towns. The "rust belt" became a part of American geography. The choice for General Motors was to squeak by with cosmetic changes and wait for the return of business as usual. Or dare to set the pattern for an industrial renaissance in America.

We took the dare. Our basic premise was simple, our vision was clear: The future belongs to those who invest in it.

We went to work. A strategy for the Eighties was hammered out. We would:

- Build new plants and modernize or close old ones.
- Give people the opportunity to participate in managing the business, and teach them to use technology as a tool.
- Use systems engineering and worldwide computer systems to help design cars, operate equipment, and leapfrog the industry in product quality and value.
- Then reap the cost savings and earn the profits of this new production system—and pass its benefits along to every customer.

Today the strategy is paying off. Most of the capital spending is complete. Most of the parts are in place. Quality is improving, costs are coming down. A new method of production is evolving. We are integrating new technology with new social systems in a human partnership that gives people authority over machines and responsibility for their work.

We are showing that you don't have to leave the country or give up your markets if you're willing to face the future, if you dare to have a vision and the courage to see it through.

Hughes Aircraft, EDS and other acquisitions are helping in the historic transformation of General Motors. In the process, we are retraining so many employes that we have become the largest private educational institution in the world.

In General Motors, cooperation is producing quality and quality is lowering costs.

In fact, we expect to cut costs by $3 billion this year and $10 billion annually by 1990.

And most important is what you, our customer, can expect to gain. Not just better products, but the best.

In fact, based on our rigorous audit, many GM cars are already world-class. We are vying with our most formidable competitors to see who will set the standards for the world.

Our goal is to be the undisputed quality leader in every price class in which we compete. And we're on the way.

The vision is paying off.

This advertisement is part of our continuing effort to give customers useful information about their cars and trucks and the company that builds them.

GM
MARK OF EXCELLENCE

Chevrolet • Pontiac
Oldsmobile • Buick
Cadillac • GMC Truck

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking By Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, And Low Birth Weight.

Kings: 12 mg. "tar," 0.9 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Feb. 1985.

©Lorillard, Inc., U.S.A., 1987

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED